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THE

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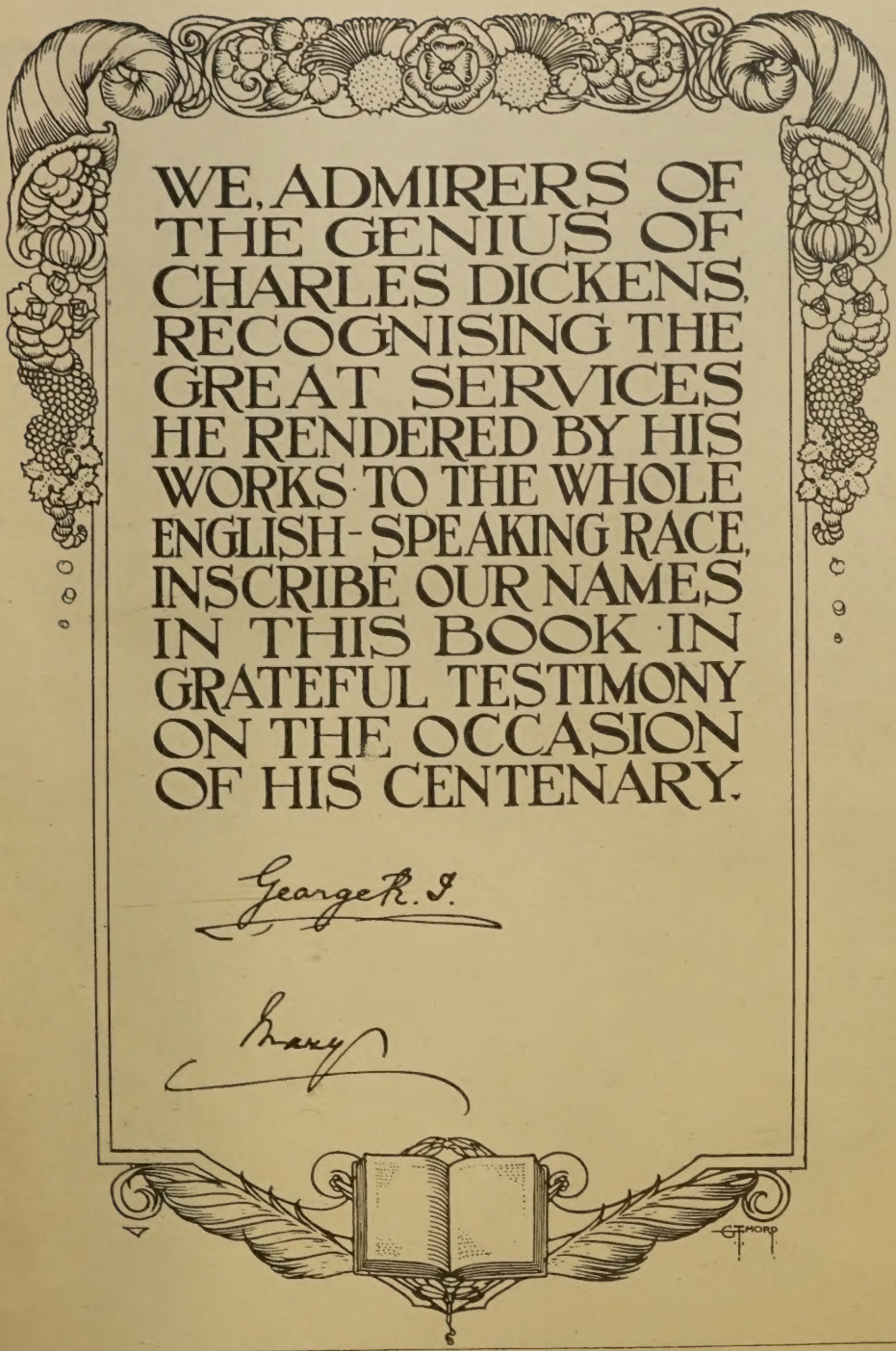
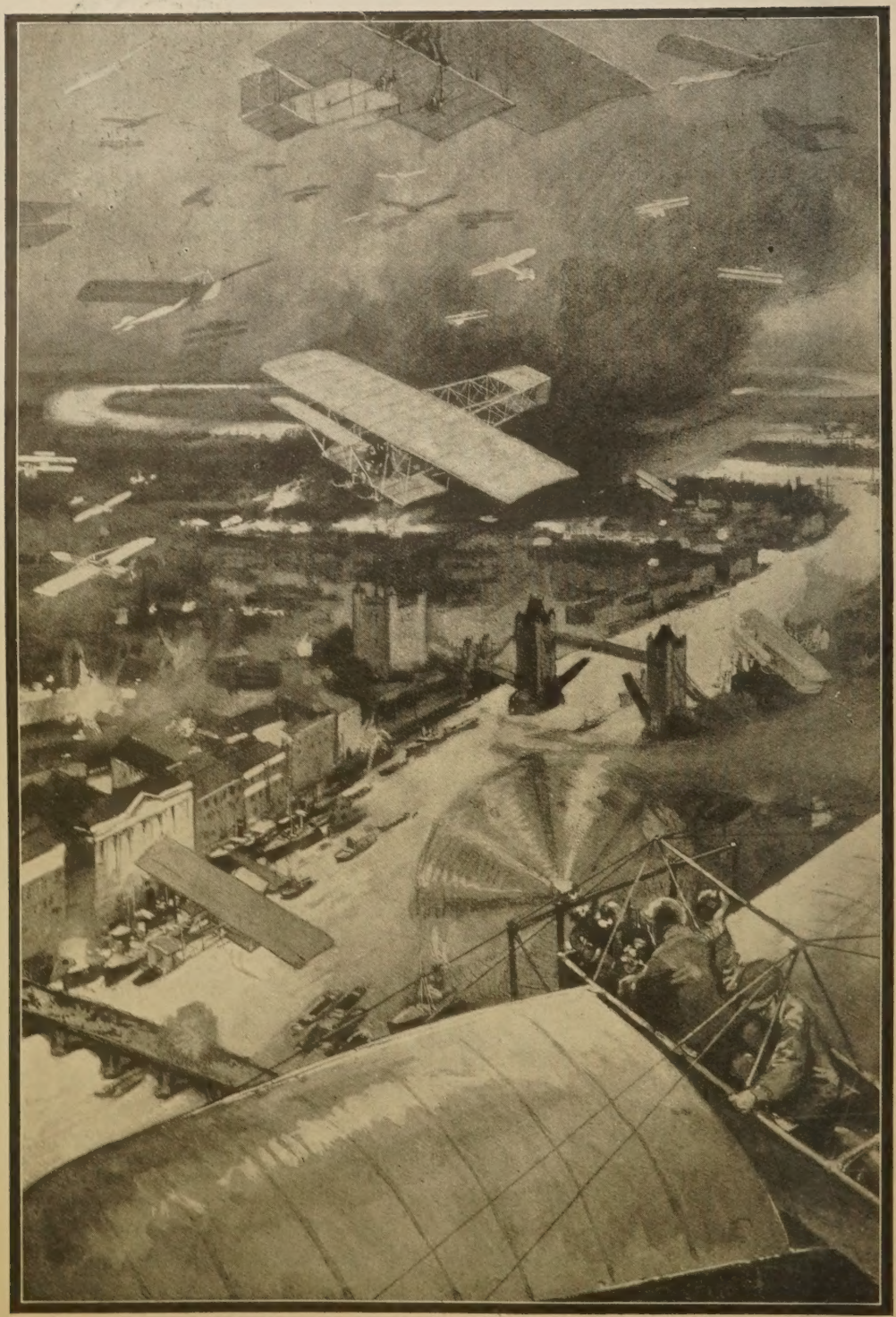


Facsimile of the first page of the Dickens Centenary Register.

Destined to contain many thousands of the signatures of Dickens readers, and to be deposited on the hundredth anniversary of the great novelist's birth at his birthplace at Portsmouth. The first to sign it were Their Majesties King George and Queen Mary, and after these Royal signatures come an illustrious roll of many of the most famous men and women of our time. Any admirer of Dickens may sign it at the Peggotty's Hut in the Crystal Palace Grounds or the Old Curiosity Shop, Great White City.



"A FLEET OF TWO THOUSAND AEROPLANES DROPPING BOMBS ON LONDON."

(*See page* 8.)

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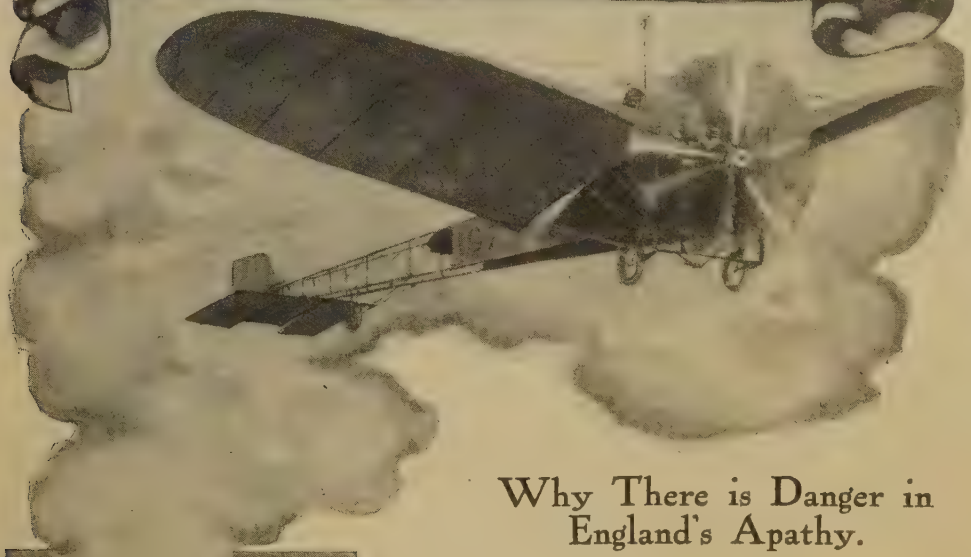
The Aerial Menace



Why There is Danger in England's Apathy.

By CLAUDE GRAHAME-WHITE.

A YEAR or so ago, when the first crude aeroplanes were flying yards instead of miles, and when no flight of any kind was possible unless there was practically a dead calm, there were clever men who smiled when air-craft were spoken of as possible weapons in time of war. Now, in 1911, a man whirls through the air at sixty-three miles an hour, lunching in London and having tea in Paris, and amazing the whole world by bridging the distance between the two capitals in a monoplane in three hours less time than is taken by the fastest train and the quickest turbine steamer.

And this only half reveals the phenomenal progress which the aeroplane is making. A weight-carrying machine, bearing aloft a pilot and two passengers, can fly across country for several hours without descending, at a speed in excess of that of the fastest motor-car. An aeroplane can now soar aloft until it hovers more than two miles above the earth; and, instead of being chained to the ground by every breeze that blows, a skilled pilot can now fly with safety in a wind blowing at a velocity of twenty-five miles an hour, while, if the

need is exceptionally urgent, he can keep aloft without accident in a wind of thirty, and even thirty-five, miles an hour.

Thus the range of the aeroplane's potentialities has been immeasurably widened. Therefore, wise men, far-seeing men, smile no longer when the war aeroplane comes under discussion. Nor do wise Governments, for it is in regard to their uses in military operations that the recent developments of air-craft have had most significance. From being frail, unreliable machines, usable only under ideal conditions, they have been improved so enormously that they are now strong and efficient, and able to take the air in any wind short of a gale.

These facts—for they are facts—cannot be over-emphasized. They explain the growing activities of many nations concerning aerial armaments; they throw the official apathy in England into a strong and searching light. Why are other countries devoting time and money, unstintingly, to strengthening their air-corps, increasing the skill of their airmen, and perfecting their aerial organization? And why is it that in England sums which can only be described as paltry are set aside for war aeroplanes and men, and that permeating the official attitude towards this new "arm" there is indifference?

France *knows*. When I say this I mean that the French military authorities have put the aeroplane to every possible test as an instrument of war, and have come to many vitally important conclusions. What those conclusions are may be gathered from the recent actions of the French authorities in connection with their air forces. It is not so long ago that France owned not more than twenty war aeroplanes. Now she has, in actual use, more than a hundred; and the orders which she has placed with French manufacturers will soon increase the total of her machines to a hundred and fifty. Nor is she to be content with this. By the end of 1911 it is the aim of her military controllers to equip a complete air-fleet of two hundred machines, with perfectly-trained pilots and observers, and an adequate organization of mechanicians and repair depôts.

France is embarking upon all this expense with enthusiasm, because her military experts are absolutely convinced that the aeroplane is to prove of a value almost inestimable in time of war. There is nothing half-hearted about her attitude; she has made up her mind. M. Berteaux, her new War Minister, made this declaration publicly and with all possible emphasis: "*The aeroplane has become the most admirable of modern engines of war.*" These were strong words for a War Minister to use. But France, as I have said, who has had more experience than any other nation in regard to war aeroplanes—*France knows!*

We in England are following a policy that is not, apparently, any real policy at all. We have had practically no experience of war aeroplanes, and yet we discount their value. Whereas France knows, and is enthusiastic, we do *not* know—and are apathetic. Some military experts in this country, who have taken upon themselves to belittle the aeroplane as a war weapon, have not been competent to do so. In this lies our peril—we merely think we know. We are making judgments regarding war aeroplanes which are formed upon theory, and not upon experience.

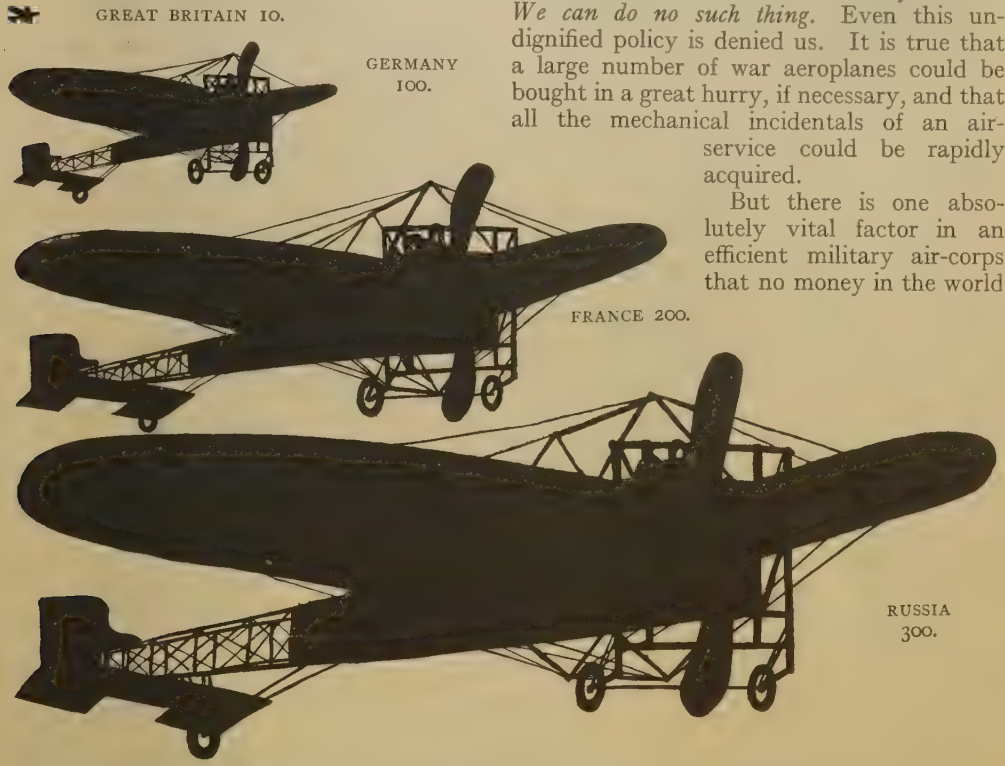
One cannot refrain from quoting the recent pronouncement of Major Sir Alexander Bannerman, which caused a sensation in aeronautical circles in this country, seeing that the speaker is now the officer in command of our military air battalion. Speaking deliberately, at the annual dinner of the Royal Aero Club, Sir Alexander Bannerman said: "In my opinion the aeroplane is not very far ahead, for military purposes, of what it was at the time of Wilbur Wright's first flight."

This statement, mark you, was made in face of an eight-hour flight by an aeroplane; in face of frequent one-hundred-mile reconnoitring flights by French officers; in face of the fact that Mr. Sopwith, an English airman who was present at the dinner, had flown, a month previously, upon a British-built machine, from England into Belgium—a non-stop flight of a hundred and sixty-nine miles.

I have spoken of the significant activity in France. Now let me cite the examples set us by other countries. Russia, awakening quickly to the value of the aeroplane for war work, intends to spend nine hundred thousand pounds upon military aeroplanes. She has, as a matter of fact, set about the creation, immediately, of a fleet of three hundred machines. Russian officers are being trained to pilot aeroplanes and to observe from them, in large numbers, not only in Russia, but at the "schools" in France.

And what about Germany, who is ever shrewd and watchful in regard to all questions of military armament? Her attitude in connection with the aeroplane is more than instructive. Immediately a war machine emerged from the experimental into the

practical stage the German War Office bought forty special monoplanes and began to train officers to fly—generally in secret, and with great expedition. As a matter of fact, German airmen are now being trained in batches of fifty at a time. Although she began to interest herself in war aeroplanes only at a comparatively recent date, Germany has already increased her forty monoplanes to close upon a hundred machines, representing all the best types for military use, and she is still ordering more.



THIS DIAGRAM SHOWS THE RELATIVE NUMBERS OF WAR AEROPLANES POSSESSED BY THE CHIEF EUROPEAN POWERS.

While all these other countries are buying aeroplanes in consignments of fifty and a hundred, and are *training men* unsparingly to become efficient in handling this new weapon of war, what is it, actually, that we are doing?

We have acquired ten military aeroplanes, at least two of which are obsolete, and we have made no plans at all as regards buying any more. We have two or three officers as expert airmen in connection with the air battalion; and there is an intention, I believe, to train a few more during the summer. How does this compare with the activities in France, Germany, and Russia? If it is good enough for these experienced countries to spend thousands of pounds, why should it be sufficient for us to spend hundreds?

There is, I am given to understand, one supposition which excuses our official apathy. It is that we can make up lost ground in military aviation at any time, merely by spending a large amount of money. No supposition could be more fatally foolish. *We can do no such thing.* Even this undignified policy is denied us. It is true that a large number of war aeroplanes could be bought in a great hurry, if necessary, and that all the mechanical incidentals of an air-service could be rapidly acquired.

But there is one absolutely vital factor in an efficient military air-corps that no money in the world could buy. That factor is represented by the priceless experience which France and Germany have acquired, not in the mere spending of money, but by assiduous experimenting in all practical forms of aerial work. We in England are at least a year behind these two countries in the development of the war aeroplane; and this year is represented also by extraordinarily important pioneer work. During this wonderful year of progress other countries have learned lessons that—even if we bought to-day an air-fleet numerically equal to theirs—would enable them to be infinitely our superiors in the performance of all aerial operations.

So far I have shown what other nations are doing, in comparison with the little that we are doing; and I think the case that I have

made out is a pretty definite one. Having thus cleared the ground, so to speak, one can approach the crux of the situation. It is contained in the question: "What are we losing by this official apathy?"

The answer to this question is a simple one. The present-type scouting aeroplane—usable in high winds and mechanically almost as reliable as a motor-car—forms, with wireless telegraphy as its adjunct, the most perfect "eye" that the commander-in-chief of an army could possibly obtain.

In modern warfare a commander of troops is always seeking, as it has been aptly put, "to see what is going on upon the other side of a hill." Information regarding the movements of his opponent are vital to him. With a thoroughly efficient air-corps he can see what his opponent is doing—has an opportunity of anticipating the enemy's moves. A modern reconnoitring aeroplane, carrying its steersman, engineer, and observer, with an ability to rise from three thousand to five thousand feet, as the requirements of the situation demand, can see what is on the other side of all hills; and it can, furthermore, flash back its news by wireless without an instant's delay.

A commander who is not supplied with scouting aeroplanes will need to rely upon cavalry to do his reconnoitring for him, or use other and more indirect means of communication. It is now a fact well recognized by military experts, both in France and in Germany, that aeroplane scouts can perform in an hour observation work that would occupy cavalry a whole day—and can do it more efficiently.

In making such statements as this I am not quoting what is mere surmise. In France, since the military air-corps was placed on a practical footing, long-distance reconnoitring flights have been made almost daily. It is now no uncommon thing at Government air-stations for a pilot and an observer to start away upon an army biplane and remain in the air for a couple of hours, surveying a wide tract of country and bringing back an accurately made-out map, or a series of notes describing all that the reconnoitring officer has seen.

Regarding wireless telegraphy from aeroplanes, the importance of this innovation is now well recognized both in France and in Germany. Tests with military machines have recently been carried out at the aerodrome at Buc, in France. Although precise details of the equipment used did not, naturally, become known, I have been able to ascertain that, with an exceedingly portable apparatus, messages have been transmitted from an aeroplane in flight to a receiving station on the ground over a distance of ten miles. This intelligence will be carried to headquarters without any of the delay occasioned by the flying back and landing of the aeroplane.

We have received lessons enough to indicate the value of the war aeroplane. It has become, indeed, an axiom of modern war that even a poor strategist, armed with complete information regarding the movements of an opponent prior to a decisive action, will be in a very good position to triumph over a far more clever commander—providing the latter has not been well served by his reconnoitring staff. And yet we hesitate—even in face of these object-lessons, provided practically every day by other countries.

So far I have dealt with the war aeroplane from its purely scouting point of view. But there is now another aspect of the war machine. At first this peril—for peril it is—was a negligible quantity; but with every recent improvement made in the aeroplane for military purposes this peril has become more real. I refer to the destructive potentialities of the weight-carrying machines which are now being constructed.

In the early days of the development of flying it was considered a wonderful thing if a machine could be constructed to lift a passenger into the air, in addition to the pilot. But by degrees the weight-lifting capacity of machines has enormously increased. It is possible to-day for a machine to be built to carry a pilot, an engineer, and an appreciable load of explosives in the form of bombs, and fly thus laden for several hours at a very high rate of speed.

As a matter of fact, machines of this type are already being constructed—not in England, as one might imagine, but abroad. Perhaps a striking object-lesson in this connection may be permitted, without one's being accused of "scaremongering" tendencies. Personally, I should be almost willing to run the risk of being described as a panic-raiser were it possible, by alarming people, to arouse England from her apathy regarding the aerial menace.

This, then, is an object-lesson for those people who still persist in smiling when the war aeroplane is spoken of. A thousand weight-lifting machines of modern construction could leave foreign soil to-morrow, could make their way by air till they hovered over London, could drop explosives, or incendiary bombs, to the weight of more than two

TWO THOUSAND AEROPLANES CAN BE BUILT AT THE PRICE OF A SINGLE "DREADNOUGHT."

hundred tons upon the streets and buildings of the city, and could fly back again to their starting-point, without once having need to descend. This, I know, is a form of warfare that has for years past been the happy hunting-ground of imaginative writers. Well, all one can say now is that such a form of aerial attack has ceased to be a matter of fiction. It has become a fact. Not with machines that foreign armies may possess, say, in five years' time, but with aeroplanes that they are building to-day, could such a form of attack be delivered.

And we cannot comfort ourselves even with the thought that such an aerial invasion would only be possible in weather that was perfectly calm. It could be carried out to-day in quite a high wind; and, as the speed of machines increases, it will soon become possible to make such a flight in half a gale.

Are such facts as these properly realized in England? I am afraid they cannot be, or there would be far greater interest in this question of aerial warfare. Have we any plans for dealing with such a form of attack? I have certainly heard of none. It is not as though the war aeroplane were now at the point of its highest development. Quite the reverse is the case. As it exists to-day, wonderful instrument though it has become, it is little more than a crude, experimental machine. It is, indeed, merely upon the threshold of its real development for military purposes.

As each year goes by this peril of the destructive potentialities of the aeroplane will increase. Its scouting powers will improve also. The longer we delay in England in regard to placing ourselves abreast of other nations in aerial armaments the worse our position will be.

There is one very vital point also that I

have not yet touched upon. The aeroplane is not an expensive weapon. From the military point of view, such a statement as this has great importance. Let me take a practical example to illustrate what I mean. A *Dreadnought* costs, let us say, a million and a quarter. For an expenditure of this amount any country could provide itself with a *couple of thousand* aeroplanes!

This means, as I have said, a great deal. It means that in future warfare the aeroplane will not be employed in units, but in large squadrons. Many people still think of the aeroplane, even for military purposes, as a machine to be used in twos and threes. But France, Germany, and Russia have ceased to make this mistake. They are laying their plans for the eventual employment of war machines, not in fifties, or even in hundreds, but in thousands. Costing so little, and being so quickly built, the aeroplane is an ideal machine, in fact, for use in large numbers. And it will not be so much for reconnoitring as for destructive work that these large squadrons of machines will be created and organized.

Imagine the effect produced by a couple of thousand machines, all designed for offensive work, dropping bombs, by concerted action, upon the supply stores of an enemy, or setting out to harass troops on the march, or delivering some night attack upon a chosen position. Considered individually, it is true that the aeroplane has an insignificant importance from the offensive point of view; but when the work of large numbers of these machines is taken into consideration, a very different tale is to be told.

I am afraid, though, that such facts as these are not considered worthy of very serious consideration in official circles in this country. In face of the strenuous efforts made by other countries, our War Office remains indifferent. Perhaps, in using such a sentence, I am not quite expressing my meaning, however. I may be told, for instance, that a great deal of official interest is really being taken in this subject, and that all the work of foreign countries is being carefully watched.

In fact, in a recent semi-official revealing of policy on this subject the War Office represented itself as following a very straightforward, if conservative, policy. It would buy a few machines; it would train a few officers; it would test aeroplanes in the manœuvres. It was fully alive to all that was going on. This was the policy described. I imagine that it may have satisfied some very easily-pleased people.

But it had, in my view, and in the view of other practical airmen, one very serious flaw. It spells the wasting of much precious time —time that we cannot afford to waste. It means that, while other countries are adding to their air-fleets in hundreds, and are training large and efficient forces of pilots and observers, we shall be pottering along with a minimum of machines and men, content to watch the progress of other nations, and profit, so far as possible, by their experience.

Such a *rôle* is not to the credit of a great nation like ours. Besides any question of dignity, it is not, as I have shown, a feasible one. Without airmen and observers for military work we are helpless. A first-class military pilot will take practically a year to make thoroughly efficient in all branches of his work. Aerial observers cannot be trained quickly, either. They are, to a certain extent also, born, and not made. Therefore the War Office policy is not the right one. It attaches no particular importance to the wasting of six precious months in dilatory, unambitious test work. And yet, in such six months of wasted opportunity, France and Germany will be increasing their advantage over us in all departments of an air-service.

Despite the fact that we are woefully behind, we are, apparently, to put forth no drastic efforts to make up our leeway. Instead, we are to lag even farther in the rear. That is to say, we are to fall back in the race for aerial supremacy unless Government apathy can be dispelled by the arousing of public interest in the war aeroplane. This interest I and others have decided to make it our business to stimulate in every possible way.

In the manœuvres this September civilian airmen will play a part. In many other ways also—such as the effective demonstration of military airmanship given at Hendon on May 12th, when Mr. Balfour and Mr. McKenna both made flights with me—we shall find it possible to give the Government and the public object-lessons of the value of this new "arm."

A "live" and constructive aerial policy is urgently needed—and a constructive policy England must have.

The Best Sauce.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by René Bull.

EVE HENDRIE sat up in bed. For two hours she had been trying to get to sleep, but without success. Never in her life had she felt more wakeful.

There were two reasons for this. Her mind was disturbed, and she was very hungry. Neither sensation was novel to her. Since first she had become paid companion to Mrs. Rastall-Retford there had hardly been a moment when she had not been hungry. Some time before Mrs. Rastall-Retford's doctor had recommended to that lady a Spartan diet, and in this Eve, as companion, had unwillingly to share. It was not pleasant for either of them, but at least Mrs. Rastall-Retford had the knowledge that she had earned it by years of honest self-indulgence. Eve had not that consolation.

Meagre fare, moreover, had the effect of accentuating Mrs. Rastall-Retford's always rather pronounced irritability. She was a massive lady, with a prominent forehead, some half-dozen chins, and a manner towards those in her employment which would have been resented in a second mate by the crew of a Western ocean tramp. Even at her best she was no ray of sunshine about the house. And since the beginning of the self-denying ordinance she had been at her worst.

But it was not depression induced by her employer that was disturbing Eve. That was a permanent evil. What was agitating her so extremely to-night was the unexpected arrival of Peter Rayner.

It was Eve's practice to tell herself several times a day that she had no sentiment for Peter Rayner but dislike. She did not attempt to defend her attitude logically, but nevertheless she clung to it, and to-night, when he entered the drawing-room, she had endeavoured to convey by her manner that it was only with the greatest difficulty that she remembered him at all, and that, having accomplished that feat, she now intended to forget him again immediately. And he had grinned a cheerful, affectionate grin, and beamed on her without a break till bedtime.

Before coming as companion to Mrs. Rastall-Retford Eve had been governess to Hildebrand, aged six, the son of a Mrs. Elphinstone. It had been, on the whole, a comfortable situation. She had not liked Mrs. Elphinstone, but Hildebrand had been docile, and altogether life was quite smooth and pleasant until Mrs. Elphinstone's brother came for a visit. Peter Rayner was that brother.

There is a type of man who makes love with the secrecy and sheepish reserve of a cowboy shooting up a Wild West saloon. To this class Peter belonged. He fell in love with Eve at sight, and if, at the end of the first day, there was anyone in the house who was not aware of it, it was only Hildebrand, aged six. And even Hildebrand must have had his suspicions.

Mrs. Elphinstone was among the first to become aware of it. For two days, frostily silent and gimlet-like as to the eye, she observed Peter's hurricane wooing from afar; then she acted. Peter she sent to London, pacifying him with an invitation to return to the house in the following week. This done, she proceeded to eliminate Eve. In the course of the parting interview she expressed herself perhaps a little less guardedly than was either just or considerate; and Eve, flushed and at war with the whole race of Rayners, departed that afternoon to seek a situation elsewhere. She had found it at the house of Mrs. Rastall-Retford.

And now this evening, as she sat in the drawing-room playing the piano to her employer, in had walked the latter's son, a tall, nervous young man, perpetually clearing his throat and fiddling with a pair of gold-rimmed glasses, with the announcement that he had brought his friend, Mr. Rayner, to spend a few days in the old home.

Eve could still see the look on Peter's face as, having shaken hands with his hostess, he turned to her. It was the look of the cowboy who, his weary ride over, sees through the dusk the friendly gleam of the saloon windows, and with a happy sigh reaches for his revolver. There could be no two meanings to that look. It said, as clearly as if he had shouted it, that this was no accidental meeting; that he had tracked her down and proposed to resume matters at the point where they had left off.

Eve was indignant. It was abominable that he should pursue her in this way. She sat thinking how abominable it was for five minutes; and then it suddenly struck her that she was hungrier than ever. She had forgotten her material troubles for the moment. It seemed to her now that she was quite faint with hunger.

A cuckoo-clock outside the door struck one. And, as it did so, it came to Eve that on the sideboard in the dining-room there were biscuits.

A moment later she was creeping softly down the stairs.

It was dark and ghostly on the stairs. The house was full of noises. She was glad when she reached the dining-room. It would be pleasant to switch on the light. She pushed open the door, and uttered a cry. The light was already switched on, and at the table, his back to her, was a man.

There was no time for flight. He must have heard the door open. In another moment he would turn and spring.

She spoke tremulously.

"Don't—don't move. I'm pointing a pistol at you."

The man did not move.

"Foolish child!" he said, indulgently. "Suppose it went off!"

She uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"You! What are you doing here, Mr. Rayner?"

"YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MR. RAYNER?"

She moved into the room, and her relief changed swiftly into indignation. On the table were half a chicken, a loaf, some cold potatoes, and a bottle of beer.

"I'm eating, thank goodness!" said Peter, helping himself to a cold potato. "I had begun to think I never should again."

"Eating!"

"Eating. I know a man of sensibility and

refinement ought to shrink from raiding his hostess's larder in the small hours, but hunger's death to the finer feelings. It's the solar plexus punch which puts one's better self down and out for the count of ten. I am a large and healthy young man, and, believe me, I need this little snack. I need it badly. May I cut you a slice of chicken ? "

She could hardly bear to look at it, but pride gave her strength.

" No," she snapped.

" You're sure ? Poor little thing ; I know you're half starved."

Eve stamped.

" How dare you speak to me like that, Mr. Rayner ? "

He drank bottled beer thoughtfully.

" What made you come down ? I suppose you heard a noise and thought it was burglars ? " he said.

" Yes," said Eve, thankfully accepting the idea. At all costs she must conceal the biscuit motive.

" That was very plucky of you. Won't you sit down ? "

" No, I'm going back to bed."

" Not just yet. I've several things to talk to you about. Sit down. That's right. Now cover up your poor little pink ankles, or you'll be catching——"

She started up.

" Mr. Rayner ! "

" Sit down."

She looked at him defiantly, then, wondering at herself for doing it, sat down.

" Now," said Peter, " what do you mean by it ? What do you mean by dashing off from my sister's house without leaving a word for me as to where you were going ? You knew I loved you."

" Good night, Mr. Rayner."

" Sit down. You've given me a great deal of trouble. Do you know it cost me a sovereign in tips to find out your address ? I couldn't get it out of my sister, and I had to apply to the butler. I've a good mind to knock it off your first week's pin-money."

" I shall not stay here listening——"

" You knew perfectly well I wanted to marry you. But you fly off without a word and bury yourself in this benighted place with a gorgon who nags and bullies you——"

" A nice way to speak of your hostess," said Eve, scornfully.

" A very soothing way. I don't think I ever took such a dislike to a woman at first sight before. And when she started to bullyrag you, it was all I could do—— But it won't last long now. You must come away at once. We'll be married after Christmas, and in the meantime you can go and live with my sister——"

Eve listened speechlessly. She had so much to say that the difficulty of selection rendered her dumb.

" When can you start ? I mean, do you have to give a month's notice or anything ? "

Eve got up with a short laugh.

" Good night, Mr. Rayner," she said. " You have been very amusing, but I am getting tired."

" I'm glad it's all settled," said Peter. " Good night."

Eve stopped. She could not go tamely away without saying a single one of the things that crowded in her mind.

" Do you imagine," she said, " that I intend to marry you ? Do you suppose, for one moment——"

" Rather ! " said Peter. " You shall have a splendid time from now on, to make up for all you've gone through. I'm going to be awfully good to you, Eve. You sha'n't ever have any more worries, poor old thing." He looked at her affectionately. " I wonder why it is that large men always fall in love with little women. There are you, a fragile, fairy-like, ethereal wisp of a little creature ; and here am I——"

" A great, big, greedy *pig !* " burst out Eve, " who thinks about nothing but eating and drinking."

" I wasn't going to have put it quite like that," said Peter, thoughtfully.

" I hate a greedy man," said Eve, between her teeth.

" I have a healthy appetite," protested Peter. " Nothing more. It runs in the family. At the time of the Civil War the Rayner of the period, who was King Charles's right-hand man, would frequently eat despatches to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy. He was noted for it."

Eve reached the door and turned.

" I despise you," she said.

" Good night," said Peter, tenderly. " Tomorrow morning we'll go for a walk."

His prediction proved absolutely correct. He was smoking a cigarette after breakfast when Eve came to him. Her face was pink and mutinous, but there was a gleam in her eye.

" Are you ready to come out, Mr. Rayner ? " she said. " Mrs. Rastall-Retford says I'm to take you to see the view from the golf links."

" You'll like that," said Peter.

" I shall not like it," snapped Eve. " But

Mrs. Rastall-Retford is paying me a salary to do what she tells me, and I have to earn it."

Conversation during the walk consisted mainly of a monologue on the part of Peter. It was a crisp and exhilarating morning, and he appeared to be feeling a universal benevolence towards all created things. He even softened slightly on the subject of Mrs Rastall-Retford, and advanced the theory that her peculiar manner might be due to her having been ill-treated as a child.

Eve listened in silence. It was not till they were nearing home on their return journey that she spoke.

"Mr. Rayner," she said.

"Yes?" said Peter.

"I was talking to Mrs. Rastall-Retford after breakfast," said Eve, "and I told her something about you."

"My conscience is clear."

"Oh, nothing bad. Some people would say it was very much to your credit." She looked away across the fields. "I told her you were a vegetarian," she added, carelessly.

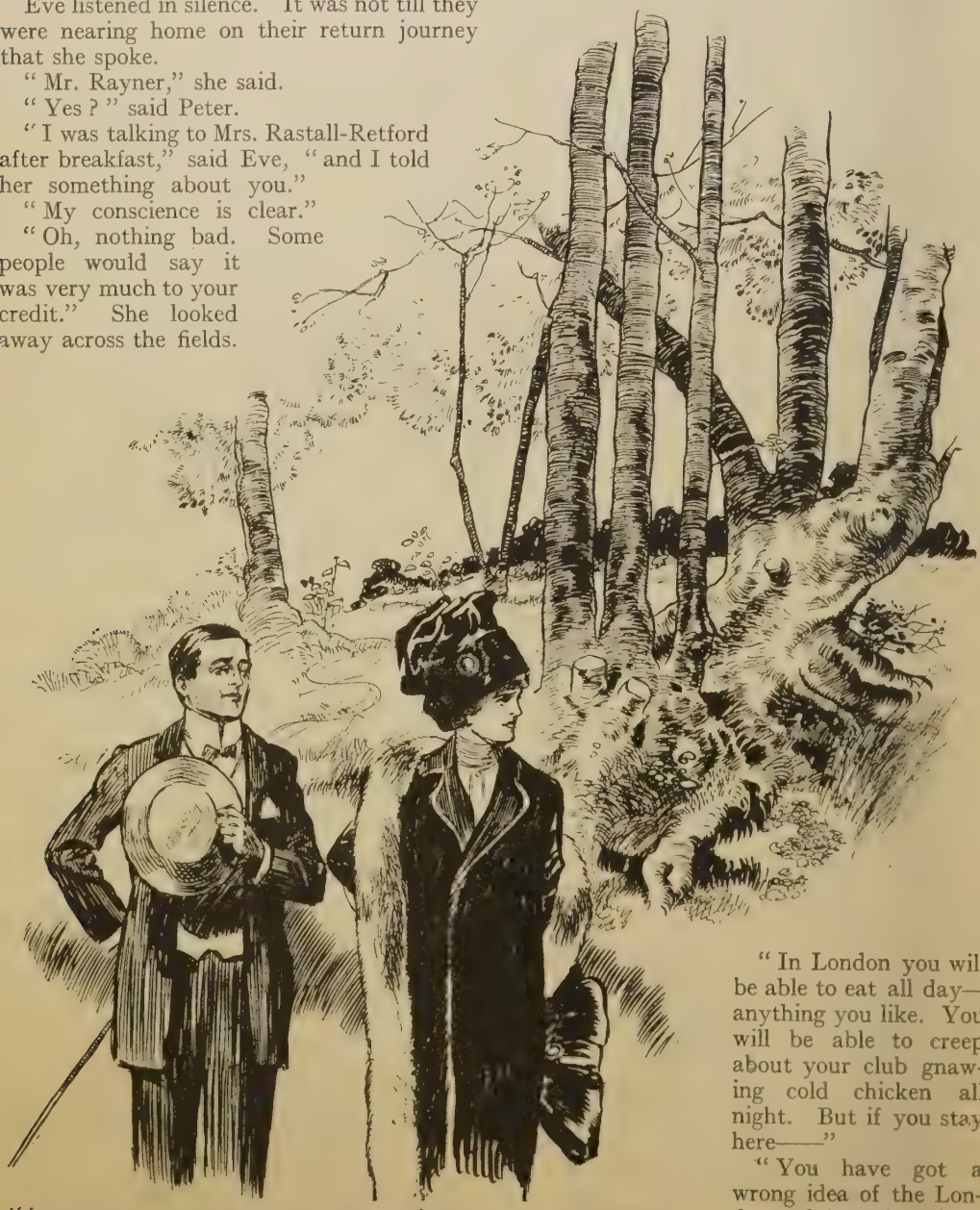
There was a long silence. Then Peter spoke three words, straight from the heart.

"You little devil!"

Eve turned and looked at him, her eyes sparkling wickedly.

"You see!" she said. "Now perhaps you will go."

"Without you?" said Peter, stoutly. "Never!"



"'I TOLD HER YOU WERE A VEGETARIAN,' SHE ADDED, CARELESSLY."

"In London you will be able to eat all day—anything you like. You will be able to creep about your club gnawing cold chicken all night. But if you stay here——"

"You have got a wrong idea of the London clubman's life,"

said Peter. "If I crept about my club gnawing cold chicken I should have the committee after me. No, I shall stay here and look after you. After all, what is food?"

"I'll tell you what yours will be, if you like. Or would you rather wait and let it be a surprise? Well, for lunch you will have some boiled potatoes and cabbage and a sweet—a sort of light *soufflé* thing. And for dinner——"

"Yes, but one moment," said Peter. "If I'm a vegetarian, how did you account for my taking all the chicken I could get at dinner last night, and looking as if I wanted more?"

"Oh, that was your considerateness. You didn't want to give trouble, even if you had to sacrifice your principles. But it's all right now. You are going to have your vegetables."

Peter drew a deep breath—the breath of the man who braces himself up and thanks whatever gods there be for his unconquerable soul.

"I don't care," he said. "'A book of verses underneath the bough, a jug of wine, and thou——'"

"Oh, and I forgot," interrupted Eve. "I told her you were a teetotaller as well."

There was another silence, longer than the first.

"The best train," said Eve, at last, "is the ten-fifty."

He looked at her inquiringly.

"The best train?"

"For London."

"What makes you think that I am interested in trains to London?"

Eve bit her lip.

"Mr. Rayner," she said, after a pause, "do you remember at lunch one day at Mrs. Elphinstone's refusing parsnips? You said that, so far as you were concerned, parsnips were first by a mile, and that prussic acid and strychnine also ran."

"Well?" said Peter.

"Oh, nothing," said Eve. "Only I made a stupid mistake. I told the cook you were devoted to parsnips. I'm sorry."

Peter looked at her gravely. "I'm putting up with a lot for your sake," he said.

"You needn't. Why don't you go away?"

"And leave you chained to the rock, Andromeda? Not for Perseus! I've only been here one night, but I've seen enough to know that I've got to take you away from this place. Honestly, it's killing you. I was watching you last night. You're scared if that infernal old woman starts to open her mouth. She's crushing the life out of you. I'm going to stay on here till you say you'll marry me, or till they throw me out."

"There are parsnips for dinner to-night," said Eve, softly.

"I shall get to like them. They are an acquired taste, I expect. Perhaps I am, too. Perhaps I am the human parsnip, and you will have to learn to love me."

"You are the human burr," said Eve, shortly. "I shouldn't have thought it possible for a man to behave as you are doing."

In spite of herself, there were moments during the next few days when Eve felt twinges of remorse. It was only by telling herself that he had no right to have followed her to this house, and that he was at perfect liberty to leave whenever he wished, that she could harden her heart again. And even this reflection was not entirely satisfactory, for it made her feel how fond he must be of her to endure these evils for her sake.

And there was no doubt about there being evils. It was a dreary house in which to spend winter days. There were no books that one could possibly read. The nearest railway station was five miles away. There was not even a dog to talk to. Generally it rained. Though Eve saw little of Peter, except at meals and in the drawing-room after dinner—for Mrs. Rastall-Retford spent most of the day in her own sitting-room and required Eve to be at her side—she could picture his sufferings, and, try as she would, she could not keep herself from softening a little. Her pride was weakening. Constant attendance on her employer was beginning to have a bad effect on her nerves. Association in a subordinate capacity with Mrs. Rastall-Retford did not encourage a proud and spirited outlook on life.

Her imagination had not exaggerated Peter's sufferings. Many people consider that Dante has spoken the last word on the subject of the post-mortem housing of the criminal classes. Peter, after the first week of his visit, could have given him a few new ideas.

It is unpleasant to be half starved. It is unpleasant to be cooped up in a country-house in winter with nothing to do. It is unpleasant to have to sit at meals and listen to the only girl you have ever really loved being bullyragged by an old lady with six chins. And all these unpleasantnesses were occurring to Peter simultaneously. It is highly creditable to him that the last should completely have outweighed the others.

He was generally alone. Mr. Rastall-Retford, who would have been better than nothing as a companion, was a man who enjoyed solitude. He was a confirmed

vanisher. He would be present at one moment, the next he would have glided silently away. And, even on the rare occasions when he decided not to vanish, he seldom did much more than clear his throat nervously and juggle with his pince-nez.

Peter, in his boyhood, had been thrilled once by a narrative of a man who got stuck in the Sargasso Sea. It seemed to him now that the monotony of the Sargasso Sea had been greatly exaggerated.

Nemesis was certainly giving Peter his due. He had wormed his way into the Rastall-Retford home-circle by grossly deceitful means. The moment he heard that Eve had gone to live with Mrs. Rastall-Retford, and had ascertained that the Rastall-Retford with whom he had been at Cambridge and whom he still met occasionally at his club when he did not see him first, was this lady's son, he had set himself to court young Mr. Rastall-Retford. He had cornered him at the club and begun to talk about the dear old 'Varsity days, ignoring the embarrassment of the latter, whose only clear recollection of the dear old 'Varsity days as linking Peter and himself was of a certain bump-supper night, when sundry of the festive, led and inspired by Peter, had completely wrecked his rooms and shaved off half a growing moustache. He conveyed to young Mr. Rastall-Retford the impression that, in the dear old 'Varsity days, they had shared each other's joys and sorrows, and, generally, had made Damon and Pythias look like a pair of cross-talk knockabouts at one of the rowdier music-halls. Not to invite so old a friend to stay at his home, if he ever happened to be down that way, would, he hinted, be grossly churlish. Mr. Rastall-Retford, impressed, issued the invitation. And now Peter was being punished for his deceit. Nemesis may not be an Alfred Shrubb, but give her time and she gets there.

It was towards the middle of the second week of his visit that Eve, coming into the drawing-room before dinner, found Peter standing in front of the fire. They had not been alone together for several days.

"Well?" said he.

Eve went to the fire and warmed her hands.

"Well?" she said, dispiritedly.

She was feeling nervous and ill. Mrs. Rastall-Retford had been in one of her more truculent moods all day, and for the first time Eve had the sensation of being thoroughly beaten. She dreaded the long hours to bedtime. The thought that there might be bridge after dinner made her feel physically ill. She felt she could not struggle through a bridge night.

On the occasions when she was in one of her dangerous moods, Mrs. Rastall-Retford sometimes chose rest as a cure, sometimes relaxation. Rest meant that she retired to her room immediately after dinner, and expended her venom on her maid; relaxation meant bridge, and bridge seemed to bring out all her worst points. They played the game for counters at her house, and there had been occasions in Eve's experience when the loss of a hundred or so of these useful little adjuncts to Fun in the Home had lashed her almost into a frenzy. She was one of those bridge players who keep up a running quarrel with Fate during the game, and when she was not abusing Fate she was generally reproaching her partner. Eve was always her partner; and to-night she devoutly hoped that her employer would elect to rest. She always played badly with Mrs. Rastall-Retford, through sheer nervousness. Once she had revoked, and there had been a terrible moment and much subsequent recrimination.

Peter looked at her curiously.

"You're pale to-night," he said.

"I have a headache."

"H'm! How is our hostess? Fair? Or stormy?"

"As I was passing her door I heard her bullying her maid, so I suppose stormy."

"That means a bad time for you?" he said, sympathetically.

"I suppose so. If we play bridge. But she may go to bed directly after dinner."

She tried to keep her voice level, but he detected the break.

"Eve," he said, quickly, "won't you let me take you away from here? You've no business in this sort of game. You're not tough enough. You've got to be loved and made a fuss of and——"

She laughed shakily.

"Perhaps you can give me the address of some lady who wants a companion to love and make a fuss of?"

"I can give you the address of a man."

She rested an arm on the mantelpiece and stood looking into the blaze, without replying.

Before he could speak again there was a step outside the door, and Mrs. Rastall-Retford rustled into the room.

Eve had not misread the storm-signals. Her employer's mood was still as it had been earlier in the day. Dinner passed in almost complete silence. Mrs. Rastall-Retford sat brooding dumbly. Her eye was cold and

"SHE RESTED AN ARM ON THE MANTELPIECE AND STOOD LOOKING INTO THE BLAZE, WITHOUT REPLYING."

menacing, and Peter, working his way through his vegetables, shuddered for Eve. He had understood her allusion to bridge, having been privileged several times during his stay to see his hostess play that game, and he hoped that there would be no bridge to-night.

And this was unselfish of him, for bridge meant sandwiches. Punctually at nine o'clock on bridge nights the butler would deposit on a side-table a plate of chicken sandwiches and (in deference to Peter's vegetarian views) a smaller plate of cheese sandwiches. At the close of play Mrs. Rastall-Retford would take one sandwich from each plate, drink a thimbleful of weak whisky and water, and retire.

Peter could always do with a sandwich or two these days. But he was prepared to abandon them joyfully if his hostess would waive bridge for this particular evening.

It was not to be. In the drawing-room Mrs Rastall-Retford came out of her trance and called imperiously for the cards.

Peter, when he saw his hand after the first deal, had a presentiment that if all his hands were to be as good as this, the evening was going to be a trying one. On the other occasions when they had played he had found it an extremely difficult task, even with moderate cards, to bring it about that his hostess should always win the odd rubber, for he was an excellent player, and, like most good players, had an artistic conscience which made it painful to him to play a deliberately bad game, even from the best motives. If all his hands were going to be as strong as this first one he saw that there was disaster ahead. He could not help winning.

Mrs. Rastall-Retford, who had dealt the first hand, made a most improper diamond declaration. Her son unfilially doubled, and, Eve having chicane—a tragedy which her partner evidently seemed to consider could have been avoided by the exercise of ordinary common sense—Peter and his partner, despite Peter's best efforts, won the game handsomely.

The son of the house dealt the next hand. Eve sorted her cards listlessly. She was feeling curiously tired. Her brain seemed dulled.

This hand, as the first had done, went all in favour of the two men. Mr. Rastall-Retford won five tricks in succession, and, judging from the glitter in his mild eye, was evidently going to win as many more as he possibly could. Mrs. Rastall-Retford glowered silently. There was electricity in the air.

The son of the house led a club. Eve played a card mechanically.

"Have you no clubs, Miss Hendrie?"

Eve started, and looked at her hand.

"No," she said.

Mrs. Rastall-Retford grunted suspiciously.

Not long ago, in Westport, Connecticut, U.S.A., a young man named Harold Sperry, a telephone worker, was boring a hole in the wall of a house with a view to passing a wire through it. He whistled joyously as he worked. He did not know that he had selected for purposes of perforation the exact spot where there lay, nestling in the brickwork, a large leaden water-pipe. The first intimation he had of that fact was when a jet of water suddenly knocked him fifteen feet into a rose-bush.

As Harold felt then, so did Eve now, when, examining her hand once more to make certain that she had no clubs, she discovered the ace of that ilk peeping coyly out from behind the seven of spades.

Her face turned quite white. It is never pleasant to revoke at bridge, but to Eve just then it seemed a disaster beyond words. She looked across at her partner. Her imagination pictured the scene there would be ere long, unless——

It happens every now and then that the human brain shows in a crisis an unwonted flash of speed. Eve's did at this juncture. To her in her trouble there came a sudden idea.

She looked round the table. Mr. Rastall-Retford, having taken the last trick, had gathered it up in the introspective manner of one planning big *coups*, and was brooding tensely, with knit brows. His mother was frowning over her cards. She was unobserved.

She seized the opportunity. She rose from her seat, moved quickly to the side-table, and, turning her back, slipped the fatal card dexterously into the interior of a cheese sandwich.

Mrs. Rastall-Retford, absorbed, did not notice for an instant. Then she gave tongue.

"What are you *doing*, Miss Hendrie?"

Eve was breathing quickly.

"I—I thought that Mr. Rayner might like a sandwich."

She was at his elbow with the plate. It trembled in her hand.

"A sandwich! Kindly do not be so officious, Miss Hendrie. The idea—in the middle of a hand——" Her voice died away in a resentful mumble.

Peter started. He had been allowing his thoughts to wander. He looked from the sandwich to Eve and then at the sandwich again. He was puzzled. This had the aspect of being an olive-branch—could it be? Could she be meaning——? Or was it a subtle insult? Who could say? At any rate it was a sandwich, and he seized it, without prejudice.

"I hope at least you have had the sense to remember that Mr. Rayner is a vegetarian, Miss Hendrie," said Mrs. Rastall-Retford. "That is not a chicken sandwich?"

"No," said Eve; "it is not a chicken sandwich."

Peter beamed gratefully. He raised the olive-branch, and bit into it with the energy of a starving man. And as he did so he caught Eve's eye.

"Miss Hendrie!" cried Mrs. Rastall-Retford.

Eve started violently.

"Miss Hendrie, will you be good enough to play? The king of clubs to beat. I can't think what's the matter with you to-night."

"I'm very sorry," said Eve, and put down the nine of spades.

Mrs. Rastall-Retford glared.

"This is absurd," she cried. "You *must* have the ace of clubs. If you have not got it, who has? Look through your hand again. Is it there?"

"No."

"Then where can it be?"

"Where can it be?" echoed Peter, taking another bite.

"Why—why," said Eve, crimson, "I—I—have only five cards. I ought to have six."

"Five?" said Mrs. Rastall-Retford. "Nonsense! Count again. Have you dropped it on the floor?"

Mr. Rastall-Retford stooped and looked under the table.

"It is not on the floor," he said. "I suppose it must have been missing from the pack before I dealt."

Mrs. Rastall-Retford threw down her cards and rose ponderously. It offended her vaguely that there seemed to be nobody to blame. "I shall go to bed," she said.

Peter stood before the fire and surveyed Eve as she sat on the sofa. They were alone in the room, Mr. Rastall-Retford having

drifted silently away in the wake of his mother. Suddenly Eve began to laugh helplessly.

He shook his head at her.

"This is considerably sharper than a serpent's tooth," he said. "You should be fawning gratefully upon me, not laughing. Do you suppose King Charles laughed at my ancestor when he ate the despatches? However, for the first time since I have been in this house I feel as if I had had a square meal."

Eve became suddenly serious. The smile left her face.

"Mr. Rayner, please don't think I'm ungrateful. I couldn't help laughing, but I can't tell you how grateful I am. You don't know what it would have been like if she had found out that I had revoked. I did it once before, and she kept on about it for days and days. It was awful." She shivered. "I think you must be right, and my nerves *are* going."

"I THOUGHT MR. RAYNER MIGHT LIKE A SANDWICH."

He nodded.

"So are you—to-morrow, by the first train. I wonder how soon we can get married. Do you know anything about special licences?"

She looked at him curiously.

"You're very obstinate," she said.

"Firm," he corrected. "Firm. Could you pack to-night, do you think, and be ready for that ten-fifty to-morrow morning?"

She began to trace an intricate pattern on the floor with the point of her shoe.

"I can't imagine why you are fond of me!" she said. "I've been very horrid to you."

"Nonsense. You've been all that's sweet and womanly."

"And I want to tell you why," she went on. "Your—your sister——"

"Ah, I thought as much!"

"She—she saw that you seemed to be getting fond of me, and she——"

"She would!"

"Said some rather horrid things that—hurt," said Eve, in a low voice.

Peter crossed over to where she sat and took her hand.

"Don't you worry about her," he said. "She's not a bad sort really, but about once every six months she needs a brotherly talking-to, or she gets above herself. One is about due during the next few days."

He stroked her hand.

"Fasting," he said, thoughtfully, "clears and stimulates the brain. I fancy I shall be able to think out some rather special things to say to her this time."

Queer Companies.

By A. T. DOLLING.

Every Company mentioned in this article is now, or was at one time, actually in existence.

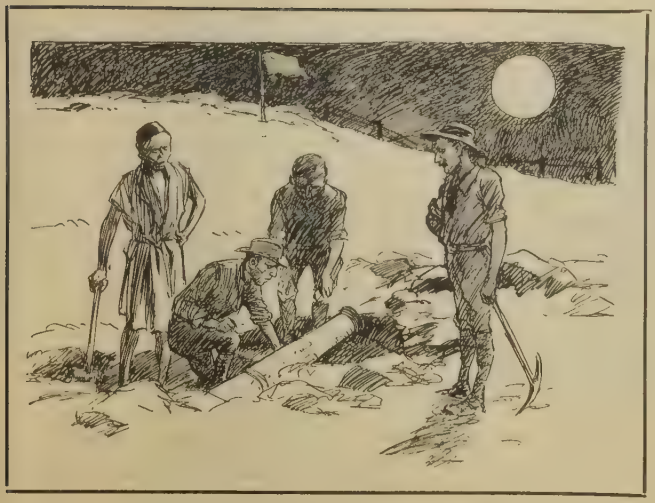
N the course of a recent article in The Strand the statement was made that British capital differed from the capital of foreign countries in that it was not timid. British capitalists constantly took risks that others would not take, and engaged in overseas adventures that often seemed extravagant, quixotic, and absurd. Perhaps, when one comes to reflect upon it, that is the true secret of John Bull's empire. It began with the daring and fantastic money-making exploits of Sir John Hawkins on the coasts of Guinea and on the Spanish main, and it is continued in our own day by the thousand and one speculative British syndicates whose field of operations cover every habitable and uninhabitable part of the globe. Not a twelvemonth passes without at least a score of these picturesque companies which disdain the beaten track of commerce and finance being registered at Somerset House. Lately, it was the Pieces of Eight Syndicate, formed to recover the treasure of the Spanish Armada in Tobermory Bay, whose operations diverted the world. We have also had the Bacon Cipher Syndicate, dredging the Wye for the precious proofs of Shakespeare's futility; but these, though instances of bizarre speculation, are domestic affairs, and do not assist in spreading the fame and influence of John Bull in foreign parts.

At the head of all British syndicates in antiquity, if not in number, are the nine separate companies which have been formed at various times to recover the treasure of the redoubtable pirate, Captain Kyd. The story of these efforts, extending over two centuries, would of itself fill a volume; and only last summer dredging operations were discontinued near Chester, Nova Scotia, owing to temporary lack of funds. The search near Bar Harbour, Maine, and in Amboyna still continues, and is occasionally whipped up into animation by the announcement of a substantial find of spade guineas or the rusty lock of one of the long-sought chests.

A few years back a City syndicate, with a modest capital of two thousand five hundred pounds, was founded to recover the valuable church plate buried by the priests during the Brazilian occupation of Paraguay, which ended some two years before. The story was one exciting enough to tempt the adventure of a much larger amount of capital. First there was the deposition of the last of the surviving priests who had been put to death by the tyrant Lopez, and the then sole repository of the secret, stating with a certain amount of precision the spot where the church plate, to the value of at least five hundred thousand dollars, had been buried. The whole thing reads like a page out of "Treasure Island." Then came the deposition of an Englishman, Armstrong, accompanied by the more tangible evidence of a solid gold communion-cup which he himself had unearthed according to directions. The capital was duly forthcoming and spent, but the church plate has, up to the present, not further been heard of.

But treasure is of all kinds, as the forty-eight different radium discovery companies bear witness. Archæological Finds, Limited, denotes, too, another kind of buried treasure. Everyone knows the value of Etruscan vases, Greek, Roman, and Assyrian bronzes, Tanagra figurines, and the thousand and one fragments of ancient civilization which are being dug out of the earth in Asia Minor. Most of these operations are being conducted by Governments and learned societies, and the annual value of the product is very great, but there are a horde of private speculators on the spot who manage, or who drive, a very good business.

"We need hardly point out," say the promoters of this company, "that archæology has its financial as well as its scientific side, and that the profits from excavated stone and metal antiques are commensurate with



"THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL FINDS" SYNDICATE—A CANNON WHICH WAS SHIPPED TO CHICAGO AS A GREEK RELIC.

the public interest in the subject. The archæological societies of the various Governments, in spite of their variable finds, have as yet merely scratched the surface of the ground. Ægean and Mycenæan pottery fetches large prices in London, Paris, Berlin, and New York, and there are tons of this ware to be had at the expenditure of moderate labour. The great Ionian cities of Asia Minor are only awaiting exploitation, which will repay at least two hundred per cent. on the capital employed."

The agents of the Archæological Finds syndicate scour the country in the vicinity now being excavated by British and Continental archæologists, and besides buying specimens from the peasants of Olympia, Delphi, Ephesus, and Crete, they sometimes recover objects of value themselves.

"We do," explained one of this syndicate's agents, "a big trade in figures, busts, metopes, and fragments generally, disposing of these to smaller museums and private collectors. Our employés are not archæologists, but simply bright young men who are instructed to buy anything two thousand years old, even if it's a mere brick or fragment of stone from a temple. On one occasion our chief agent wired us that he was offered the concession of twenty acres of land near Assos, supposed to be the site of a village, and from which a statue had been excavated. We wired him to go ahead. The price—a high one—was paid to the farmer and ten men engaged. The land was roped off and a British flag was stuck up to warn off trespassers. They ploughed for three weeks, and the only thing, except onions, they found was a small French cannon dated 1794. This would have been abandoned in disgust, but an American coming along with more money than archæological knowledge was induced by one of the workmen rather too enterprising to believe it was 1794 B.C. He offered five hundred piastres for it, and it was shipped out to Chicago as a Greek relic."

All this seems to point to the formation eventually of a large archæological trust whereby the price of bronze and marble fragments will become as much inflated as are now the paintings of the so-called old masters. One notices that the site of one of this syndicate's concessions is, appropriately enough, at Megalopolis.

Among other extraordinary trading companies there is one which does not deal in antiques, but is formed to transact business, in an up-to-date way, with antique religions. Travellers in the East have long since noted that while there continues no lack of reverence for the popular portable gods of the country,

BIRMINGHAM IDOLS FOR THE BURMESE.

a discriminating taste has sprung up which needs to be fostered. Priests, dervishes, and fakirs, as well as the common people, are no longer satisfied with ill-wrought, light-weight, or wooden idols. They know a good artistic idol when they see it, and they want plenty of them. Formerly a single idol would serve for a whole village. Now the demand is, one household one idol. Here was a great commercial opportunity. A syndicate was promptly formed, several good models were secured, and Birmingham began to turn out idols every whit as good as the real article. These are shipped off to various points in the East, especially to Burma and Tibet, and

subjects in less enlightened parts of the Empire are at last being given opportunities for flag-waving on a scale to suit their ardent temperament. Every year, as is well known, a large group of natives in Africa and Eastern Asia come within the British sphere of influence, to whom the visible emblem of the British Empire is utterly unknown. These new subjects show a great partiality for the Union Jack, and each man is desirous of having a flag of his own. Even in the older Colonies and Protectorates the Union Jack is not so easily obtainable as it ought to be, a discovery which proved a boon to many German traders, who sold half a million yards

ONE SYNDICATE EXISTS FOR SUPPLYING SAVAGES WITH UNION JACKS.

find a ready market. Some of the models being really artistic, the native mind readily grasps the difference, and, if he cannot spare the cash, is always ready to part with his own divinity, or supplement it by another possessing more taking attributes. There is another side to the syndicate's operations. After spending a few months, maybe, in the native shrines or temples, or even if they have not undergone this experience, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of these gods are ready to return to the land of their origin, where they fetch good prices as curios. No one should complain, therefore, if the little figure whose awe-inspiring history he is relating to a friend should, upon closer inspection, turn out to be a Brummagem product of the year A.D. 1909.

In this Coronation year, when the British flag is in such constant evidence, it is interesting to know that, thanks to the enterprise of another group of financiers, our fellow-

of bunting, two British flags to the yard (made in Germany), before the present syndicate was formed. It has already proved a veritable gold-mine. All over East and West Africa the inhabitants of the British zone love to consider themselves English, and "it would do an Imperialist's heart good," says the report, "to see the effect of one of our trading expeditions when a village on the Senegambian borders has purchased twelve hundred Union Jacks, which are being waved delightedly in nearly as many hands, on the ground, in tree-tops, and on hut roofs. The extreme popularity of the flag is, of course, due in the first instance to its novelty, the majority of even the coast negroes never having seen a Union Jack, except on the stern of a ship or over the British residency."

Africa, indeed, has always been a favourite field for the adventurous trader, or the trading adventurer. To bring those blessings of

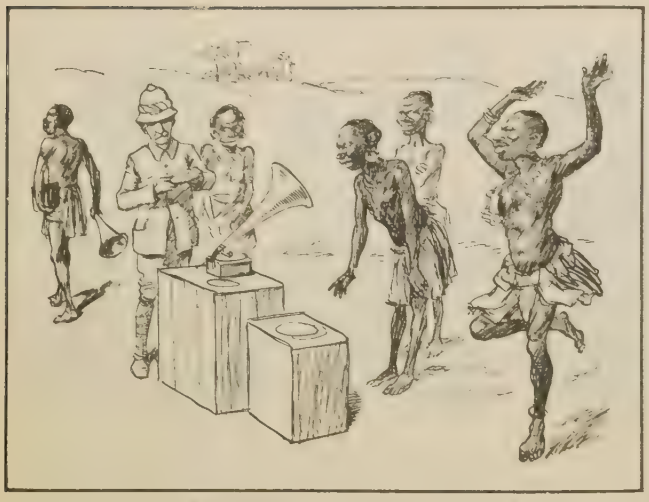
British civilization, the Bible, rum, and the rifle, to the benighted black was long the aim of an army of white pioneers. Nowadays they work on somewhat different lines. The agents of different syndicates are reaping a fortune out of patent medicines, tall silk hats, and gramophones.

THE OBJECT OF THE "WHITE COMPANY" IS TO TURN NEGROES WHITE.

A large business is conducted by the patent-medicine trading companies, for the temptation here is often irresistible to leave the beaten paths of pills and liniments, and profit by the credulity and fantastic vanity of the blacks. One vender did not hesitate to offer a dermatological preparation which professed to bleach black skin to a Caucasian white, and did such a rushing business in this audacious specific that he abandoned all his other remedies.

The agent of another company followed suit, and, in order to gain an advantage over his rival and to bring conviction to the most sceptical, he carried about with him an unhappy black who had submitted to the process as a living testimonial to the astounding merits of the patent bleaching fluid of the "White Company." It turned out, however, that it was not a caustic, such as is well known to exert an effect, but one far from desirable, on the skin, but a simple white wash of kalsomine which had been applied. The ci-devant darky, upon his metamorphosis (renewed daily), assumed all the airs and graces of a European, smoking cigarettes and affecting to look with scorn on his sable beholders. A similar, but perhaps less reprehensible, article pushed in Africa by the patent drug companies is hair-dye, very popular with both sexes. A negress with golden or violent red wool is now a common sight amongst the natives.

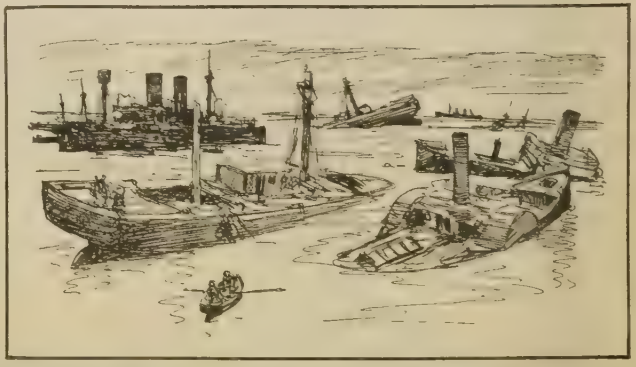
ANOTHER COMPANY SUPPLIES NATIVES WITH TOP-HATS.



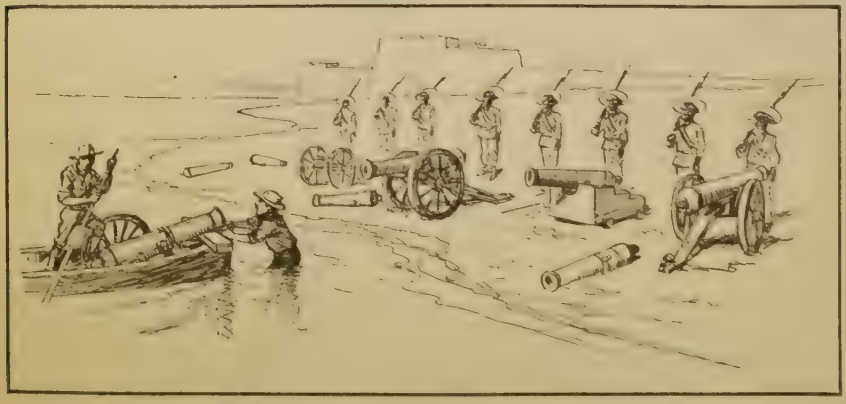
SUPPLYING GRAMOPHONES FOR NATIVES IS THE AIM OF ONE SYNDICATE.

Many persons have often wondered what became of the millions of disused top hats. A large number used to go to cabmen and various persons who could not afford a new hat, but yet were led by vanity or obliged by custom to sport *la haute forme*. But the bulk has for many years past gone to British Colonies and dependencies, where the wearing of such a dignified accessory often made the use of any other article of attire unnecessary. But it is only lately that this silk-hat trade has been systematized. There is an enormous field to be covered, and the profits are increased since the value of second-hand "toppers" in England has dropped so heavily. They can now be bought at from three to five pounds per gross, yet their price in South Africa alone ranges from four to eight shillings each, this indicating an enormous percentage of profit. "There are few aboriginal communities where a tall silk hat is not a coveted adornment," says the prospectus, "and the whole available supply might be disposed of many times over. General traders often do not care to handle them, because of the danger of damage and the difficulty of packing; but these drawbacks would be remedied if the trade were limited to special traders."

Gramophone manufacturers have for a long time past been in the habit of giving concessions to various companies to "work" certain territory, and these companies are fast penetrating into all parts of the globe. The sale of gramophones in Equatorial Africa, in India, China, and the South Sea Islands offers a rich harvest. One trading syndicate last year worked the Congo exclusively, with results that would have made the old "pocket-knife, looking-glass, and bead merchant" thrill with envy. "The chief drawback we



SALVING DERELICTS IS THE OBJECT OF ANOTHER COMPANY.



THE WORK OF THE "OBSOLETE GUN SYNDICATE."

find is still the prime cost of the article and the royalty payable to the manufacturers, besides the cost of carriage. On the other hand, it is an article that everyone who hears must have. There is only one taste as yet in these matters, and still a potential market for at least one million talking machines on the West Coast."

"Derelicts, Limited," is the name of a syndicate for the acquisition of old ships, boats, and water-craft of every description. These are collected in the Thames, patched up (frequently the sound timbers or other material of two or more vessels being employed in the reconstruction of one), and towed to various ports where timber and ship-builders do not exist. These craft fetch handsome sums for all purposes, but largely for the Morocco, Algerian, and Tunisian smuggling trade. Many an innocent old Yarmouth trawler, or even sober Thames barge that has passed its middle age in the steady attention to duty, has found itself in a whirl of tropical excitement, with twenty bewhiskered, turbaned pirates in its hold and its hull full of the Sultan's bullets. How adventurous illicit trading off Morocco can be was told some years ago by Major Spillsbury, who was dispatched from London by one of the many British syndicates who are prepared to take big risks if only adequate profit is promised.

A syndicate on similar lines to the foregoing is that which deals in obsolete armaments and War Office stores. As is well known, the scrapping of gun-metal is pursued on a huge scale by both our Army and Navy. Anyone may go down to Woolwich and for a few shillings procure a gun which a few years ago was the pride of the Master of Ordnance. These are bid for wholesale by the Obsolete Gun Syndicate, and sold to small Powers and principalities which are not particular about such trifles as modernity, length, weight, and range. A recent visitor to Salvador describes the landing of a park of artillery on the beach, in the neighbourhood of a structure dignified by the title of fort, but which carried two muzzle-loading seven-pounders of George IV.'s day! No wonder the commandant was glad to receive twenty breech-loading rifled Armstrongs which were good enough for the British Army twenty years ago.

An odd company for which City capital is solicited is that for supplying non-alcoholic beverages to Reservation Indians and others in British Columbia, and also to the natives of the South Seas. It is pointed out in the prospectus that the laws forbidding fire-water to the aborigines leave them without a proper beverage, and that the delights of bottled aerated waters, as they are known in England, are virtually unknown. Fortunes used to be made out of the Indians' and bushrangers' thirst when alcohol was permitted. Inspire him with a similar craving for the joys of ginger beer, kola, and sarsaparilla, and he will be ready to barter his last dollar to satisfy it. Perhaps a five per cent. infusion of spirit might help, although nothing is said on this head.

As a striking example of audacity in British commercial adventure, it would be hard to beat the very latest one, the operations of the syndicate for the recovery of treasure hidden in the tomb of Solomon at Jerusalem. Imagine a company of Englishmen directing English navvies in excavations under the sacred Mosque of Omar itself! The chief object of the expedition, in which several thousand pounds were invested, was the discovery of buried treasure; but incidentally the syndicate cleaned out the Virgin's Well and the tunnel of the Pool of Siloam, and carried on operations for the purpose of finding the tomb of David and Solomon and any Hebrew writing that might exist.

"TEETOTAL DRINKS FOR RED INDIANS."

But, in spite of the enormous interest created, this particular company, it is much to be feared, will not return any dividends to the investors.

The WELCOME GUEST

by JAMES WORKMAN

Illustrated by Alec Ball.

EVERY preparation had been made to welcome the anxiously-awaited guest. It was a farewell visit. Mr. Jackson would dine with his friends the Ponsonbys, spend the evening with them, and leave in time to catch the ten o'clock train for London. The next day—so he had informed them—he would change the gold and notes he would receive from the agent who had disposed of his property in Brookham for a draft on a New York bank, proceed by the boat train for Liverpool, and sail for America in the *Lusitania*. He was already a few minutes late. His interview with the agent was evidently detaining him longer than he had expected.

The Ponsonbys, who were understood to be comfortably off, but to prefer a quiet life and to object very strongly to anything that savoured of ostentation, lived in a comparatively small, ready-furnished, semi-detached villa residence on the outskirts of Brookham. They kept two servants only—a cook and housemaid—and smilingly deprecated the idea of moving to a larger house and increasing their establishment.

"No, no," said Mr. Ponsonby, in his pleasant, cultured voice. "We should add to our responsibilities by doing so; we should not add to our happiness. The larger the house the more numerous the servants, the greater the worry, the less time there can possibly be for the things that really matter—the things that make life worth living, social intercourse, reading, travelling, recreation. What do you say, my dear?"

Mrs. Ponsonby, a charming woman, both as wife and hostess, with a rather florid complexion and bright black eyes, entirely agreed with him, as she usually did. His daughter, Belle, slim, graceful, piquant, but a little pale, and given to alternate fits of gaiety and gloom, also agreed with him. His son, Dick, a tall, powerfully-built, black-haired young man, with a thick neck and a large, square-jawed, full-lipped face, who was understood to be studying for the Church, took even more pronounced views than his father, and was believed to be an enthusiastic advocate of the simple life.

A happy, harmonious, cultured, hospitable family, the Ponsonbys had been promptly admitted into the most select circles of Brookham, and were admired and thought well of by everybody. There was an air of distinction about all of them as, attired in evening-dress, they sat waiting for the arrival of their guest. Mr. Ponsonby, grey-haired, but active and erect, with clean-shaven, aquiline features and keen blue eyes, was a striking figure as he stood on the hearthrug, one long white hand mechanically playing with the cord of his gold-rimmed pince-nez. Near him sat Mrs. Ponsonby, handsome and stately, her black hair still untouched by grey, her ample form still retaining much of its youthful charm. Dick always looked his best in the well-cut evening clothes that seemed to accentuate the fine proportions of his athletic figure; and there was an inexpressible fascination about Belle, slender and supple, with her refined, delicate, elfish face, as she lay back in an easy chair with downcast, half-closed eyes.

Yet what were the actual facts of the case? These quiet-voiced, well-bred, graceful, clever, cultured men and women were simply unscrupulous adventurers, and, being now at the very end of their resources, as dangerous as starving wolves. There was nothing even remotely suggesting the melodramatic in their attitudes, gestures, or conversation. On the contrary, they had discussed the situation, decided on their plan of action, and debated the necessary arrangements down to the smallest detail, in a matter-of-fact, business-like way, and with composure that to an observer would have appeared truly amazing. And yet, in printed language, meant to be read at leisure and in cold blood, it is difficult to make credible the decision at which they had arrived. If it were not that such things—prosaically reported in the Press—constantly take place in all quarters of the world, one would despair of doing so.

Bluntly stated, their decision was that if Paul Jackson brought with him—as he was almost certain to do—the purchase-money of the property he had recently disposed of, whatever might be the consequences of their action, they would obtain possession of it. They had discussed the matter quietly, exhaustively, trying to look at it calmly and dispassionately from all possible points of view.

They were far too prudent and clear-headed to run any unnecessary risks. They were artists in their way. The use of physical force always seemed to them crude, barbarous, inartistic. They would have been glad to dispense with it. A number of ingenious schemes had been suggested by which the money could be obtained without the use of it; but, subjected to severe analysis, these schemes had proved too ingenious, too elaborate, the kind of things that would probably appear very effective on the stage, but would be almost certain to end in failure and exposure in real life. Even those who had suggested them were in the end forced to admit the truth of this.

A few simple facts had to be borne in mind. One of these was that the greater part of the money would consist of notes. There might even be a cheque or draft for a considerable amount. The numbers of the notes would be known, and the first thing Jackson would naturally do when he discovered his loss would be to communicate with the bank and the police, and anyone attempting to cash them would be promptly arrested. But if Jackson were rendered permanently incapable of interfering, though supposed to be on his way to New York, the whole of the money would be worth its face value, even cheques and drafts, for to these accomplished artists forgery was one of the most elementary branches of their profession. The final outcome of the discussion, the logical and inevitable outcome, as Mr. Ponsonby in summing up clearly proved, was that Paul Jackson must disappear.

"It is clearly the only plan of action," he said, "which is at all likely to attain the object we have in view. At the same time it entails the fewest possible risks. Of course, no plan can be so ideally perfect that all risks are entirely eliminated."

"Quite so, quite so," rejoined Dick, who had been listening to the elder man's self-evident propositions with inward impatience. "But we have to bear in mind that discovery entails immeasurably more serious consequences than in the case of any of the other schemes we have discussed. If you will allow me to say so, you hardly seem to realize that fact."

"Oh, pardon me, my dear boy, I do—fully realize it. But to my way of thinking any other plan is hopeless, so that to compare the number of risks in one case or the other seems to me entirely beside the question."

Mrs. Ponsonby permitted herself a gesture of impatience.

"I thought we had settled all that," she said. "Is it necessary to go over it all again?"

"Oh, I don't suggest that we should reconsider our decision," replied Dick; "but we may as well realize what we have got to face, and make sure that we haven't forgotten any detail that may lead to discovery. If we *should* fail——"

He shrugged his shoulders by way of completing the sentence.

"There is no possibility of failure," said Ponsonby, stiffly. "Allow me to recapitulate, and interrupt me if I am wrong. Jackson is almost unknown in this locality, and has been abroad so much, and has led so solitary a life, that he has practically no intimate friends or acquaintances in England except ourselves, and no near relatives living that he is aware of. The property he has just sold was left to him, as you know, by a distant relation who had never set eyes on him. Well, he has disposed of the property and announced his intention of going to the States to try his hand at farming. Who will inquire whether he has done so? Not a soul. Whose business will it be to do so? Why, in a few days his very existence will be forgotten. His luggage,

as he told me himself, is at the Left Luggage office at Euston. The ticket will be in his pocket-book. We give the ticket to a porter, tell him to get the luggage out, and do what we like with it. As to whether he has booked his passage or not is of very little consequence. The Cunard Company are not likely to move heaven and earth to discover his whereabouts."

"Well, I grant all that."

"Very good. Jackson comes here on foot. He dines with us. Mary, the housemaid, waits at table. She sees for herself that we are all on the best possible terms with our dear friend who is about to embark on a new career in another land and has come to bid us farewell. Very good. It is Mary's night out. Having done all that is required of her she is permitted, with some little show of reluctance, in consequence of the presence of our guest, to take her usual night off. She hurries away for fear she may be required after all. As to the cook—well, that is easily arranged. A bottle of whisky is inadvertently left in the vicinity of the kitchen, and in half an hour—Mary can testify that it has frequently happened before—the cook is oblivious of everything about her, as blind and deaf as if she were dead. Mary will not return until the last possible moment, so that from about eight to half-past ten we shall have two hours and a half in which to do all that is necessary. As to the arrangement we so fully discussed with regard to the disposal of—well, in the presence of the ladies I need not enter into details, but I think you will admit that they reduce the risk of discovery almost to the vanishing-point."

"A man enters the house. He is not seen to go out. How would that affect the situation?"

"Who sees him enter? The house next door is empty. It is quite dark. The chances are a hundred to one that nobody is passing when he arrives. And if a score of people saw him come in, how are they to know that he has not gone out again? Your question, my dear fellow, is hardly characteristic of your usual acuteness."

"Well, there is one other point. He may have told someone that he is leaving by the London train at ten o'clock. He is not seen to leave by it—what then?"

"'THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF FAILURE,' SAID PONSONBY, STIFFLY."

"My dear boy, think of the crowd there

will be on the platform to-night. If he had asked any acquaintances to see him off—a most unlikely thing—they could hardly be sure whether he was there or not. Still, the point is worth taking into consideration. We must get to know whether anyone is going to the station with him to say good-bye. If so the situation would, I admit, be seriously complicated. Belle!"

"Yes."

"You must try to get to know for us. That is your part of the business. You can do that kind of thing more tactfully than any of us."

"Very well."

The others glanced at Belle unobtrusively, but with inward anxiety. She was the weak link in the chain, the unknown quantity, the rock on which their plans might be shipwrecked. She had at first opposed the scheme vehemently, until a cold glitter in Ponsonby's eyes, a furtive glance she had observed passing between him and his wife, a gathering gloom on Dick's grim face, had sent a chill through her veins, and warned her to desist. None knew better than she what greed and cruelty lay beneath the veneer of smiling courtesy. Her tone had changed. She had contented herself with suggesting the possibilities of failure, directing attention to the weak points in the scheme; and had been met with polite, plausible explanations and arguments which had eventually silenced her. Since then she had hardly uttered a word, but her approval of the project had been taken for granted.

"BELLE."

At this stage silence fell upon all, a silence so profound that the faint ticking of the clock became sharply audible. The quiet room, illumined by the gently-flickering fire and shaded globes, looked strangely peaceful, and yet a close observer would have noticed that in repose the faces of all had grown pale and haggard, and that the furtive glances, the restless hands, the twitching lips, betokened a gnawing fear and ever-growing anxiety. The trap was laid. Would the victim enter it? If he did not their career as highly-respectable members of society was at an end. Exposure would become inevitable. Hitherto they had contrived to secure a very sufficient livelihood by operations which, though unquestionably illegal, had been carried on with such inimitable skill, such daring dexterity and ingenuity, that however many of the commandments they may have broken, however many of man's laws and ordinances they may have violated, they had never yet committed the one unpardonable sin in the eyes of society—they had never been found out. But of late fortune had frowned on them. Had luck deserted them? Were they growing slack and careless? Or was Ponsonby, the commander-in-chief, who planned their campaigns and was responsible for their strategy and tactics, getting behind the times, incapable of seeing that the devices which had been so successful in his younger days were growing old-fashioned and ineffective? Dick thought so, and in the courteous language which they affected even said so. Yet when he tried his own hand at some brand-new scheme which he had evolved he was not a whit more successful. Indeed, the result was within a hair's breadth of being absolutely disastrous.

Whatever might be the cause of this unhappy state of affairs, it was clear to all that their easy, pleasant, and profitable career as well-to-do swindlers had come to an end, and that they were threatened by a swift and probably final descent into a lower and alien sphere of existence where a bare living must be obtained by vulgar shifts and tricks,

and petty frauds and swindles. Think of an R.A. condemned to become a pavement-artist, an operatic star a street singer, a fashionable physician a pedlar of patent medicines, and you will have some idea of Ponsonby's mental attitude. The thought that he, the consummate artist, who had smilingly extracted thousands from the pockets of the British public under the eyes of Scotland Yard, without ever coming into the clutches of the law, should drop to the level of a seedy, out-at-elbow trickster, living from hand to mouth by the shillings and half-crowns that could alone reward his industry, was intolerable. He was ready to clutch at any alternative, however desperate. He had done so, and the rest, willingly or unwillingly, had followed his lead. But it was a momentous decision. You could read that in the haggard faces and brooding eyes.

The clock ticked on. The minutes glided by. Would he never come? The silence, the unexpected interval between thought and action began to tell upon their nerves. They glanced stealthily at each other. Fear, distrust, suspicion—all the hateful growths that flourish in an atmosphere of crime—began to germinate in their minds.

Dick's iron hand gripped the arm of his chair till the knuckles turned white, a cold sweat glistened on his forehead, his sombre eyes were fixed with sightless intensity on the leg of a neighbouring chair. On account of his physical strength, flatteringly alluded to, he had been unanimously chosen to play the chief part in the tragedy if, owing to some unforeseen and improbable contingency, Jackson omitted or declined to indulge in the after-dinner whisky and soda which he had never refused before. He told himself now that the others would have to take a hand in it, especially Ponsonby. He was not going to be made a cat's-paw of by the cunning old scoundrel who would gladly preserve a chance of turning King's evidence if things went wrong. His lips parted and he was about to speak, when the opening of the garden gate and a brisk step on the gravel path announced the arrival of the long-expected guest.

Presently the door was opened and Jackson was ushered in, a slightly-built man of medium height, with a pleasant voice and gentle brown eyes. He was greeted with genuine cordiality, for, incredible as it may seem, these people really liked him. Ponsonby's bland affability, Mrs. Ponsonby's glittering smile, Dick's hearty handshake, were things to wonder at. Belle alone failed to reach the high histrionic level of the others. She was gay, but her gaiety was palpably forced, her eyes sparkled feverishly, but her cheeks were colourless.

Dinner was announced almost immediately; and they moved to the dining-room. There was nothing ostentatious about the dinner, but everything was excellent of its kind, the cooking admirable, the wines of a quality that left nothing to be desired. And throughout the meal there was hardly a dull moment. Ponsonby was an inimitable conversationalist; not only a wide reader, but a man of the world who knew life at first hand, and could impart his ideas and experiences in singularly vivid and effective phrases. Mrs. Ponsonby was hardly his inferior, and even Dick had some special knack of giving a droll turn to the conversation, and had a fund of original and amusing stories. But in ordinary circumstances—as Jackson knew—Belle was the most entertaining, and by far the most brilliant of them all. Even Ponsonby's talent appeared to have been acquired by practice and experience, but Belle, in her happiest moods, had moments of inspiration in which she talked with a gay vivacity, with flashes of wit and wisdom, that suggested some touch of genius. Now, for the most part, she sat pale and silent, hardly touching the food before her, though occasionally she roused herself and, with a few swift phrases, had the ear of the table and every smiling face turned towards her.

The dinner ended. With the permission of the ladies cigars were lit, and the conversation became still more animated. The sound of a swiftly-closed door and of brisk footsteps hurrying down the garden path announced that Mary had gone. Presently a curious muttering became audible at the back of the house, accompanied by hilarious snatches of song, which finally ended in a dull thud and the crash of broken crockery. Belle rose, but Mrs. Ponsonby signed to her to sit down, and with a smiling excuse left the room. Ponsonby gave Jackson a whimsical look and shrugged his shoulders.

"Mary forgot to bring in the whisky, and the cook—but it's an old story, isn't it?" he said. "Poor Jane! I suppose she's like other artists blessed or cursed with the artistic temperament, soars high and falls low, and flies to stimulants to uplift her in moments of depression. All the same, this is going a little too far. We shall certainly have to get rid of her."

Mrs. Ponsonby came in with a soda-water siphon, a whisky decanter, and glasses on a

tray. Dick leapt to his feet, relieved her of it, and placed it on the sideboard.

"The usual thing, I suppose?" inquired Ponsonby.

"Yes, poor creature," rejoined his wife. "I'm glad she didn't hurt herself. I've got her to lie down, and she's fast asleep already, won't wake for hours. This is really the last straw, my dear. Excellent cook as she is, we can't put up with this kind of thing any longer."

"Quite so—quite so; I entirely agree with you. Now, my dear Jackson, don't look at your watch. You're surely not going to leave us yet?"

"Perhaps," said Belle, in response to a swift glance from Ponsonby, "Mr. Jackson has some other appointment. Some of his friends may be going early to the station to see him off. If that's so—however reluctant we may be to part with him—it would be inconsiderate to detain him."

Jackson smiled and shook his head.

"No," he said, pleasantly, "I'm afraid you overestimate my popularity; or if the grief at my departure is universal it has been discreetly dissembled. No one is going to see me off."

"Well, that oversight is soon remedied," said Ponsonby, briskly. "Dick and I will be delighted to stroll over to the station with you. How the time slips by! I thought we might have adjourned to the drawing-room and had a little music, but I'm afraid it's too late now. But anyway, let's have a nip before we turn out. I think I know your usual quantity."

He stepped to the sideboard, and the fizzing of the siphon was distinctly audible in the momentary silence that followed. He came back with two full glasses, put one before Jackson, and sat down with the other in his hand. Dick got up hurriedly to help himself, and, in spite of his self-command and brawny frame, the glass into which he poured a double dose of whisky shook perceptibly as he raised it to his lips. Ponsonby took a sip, put the glass on the table beside him, and puffed at his cigar.

Jackson's fingers closed on his glass, but

"JACKSON'S FINGERS CLOSED ON HIS GLASS, BUT HE DID NOT DRINK."

he did not drink. There was a curious expression on his face. He was wondering why Belle, who was sitting a little in the rear of Ponsonby, had gone so white, and had distinctly though stealthily shaken her head.

There was an interval of silence that gradually grew portentous — threatening. Mrs. Ponsonby's beady, black eyes had caught the slight movement of Belle's head, and were fixed on her with a malignant glare. Ponsonby's jaw stiffened, his lips seemed to grow thinner, but he still smiled, was still the genial and courteous host intent on entertaining his guest. Standing at the sideboard,

Dick glanced over his shoulder. His face had gone livid, sweat beaded his forehead, while his eyes were fixed with a fascinated stare on Jackson's glass.

Absent-mindedly—as if immersed in thought—Jackson raised his tumbler a few inches from the table and put it down again. Once more Belle had shaken her head, more decidedly than before. For the smallest fraction of a second Mrs. Ponsonby's eyes met her husband's, and then glanced sideways at Belle. It was enough to tell him everything, but he did not look round at Belle, and still smiled. Then he laid down his cigar on the ash-tray. It was the preconcerted signal. Silently and stealthily Dick began to move round the table, so that he could approach Jackson from behind. Ponsonby again lifted his glass.

"I think we should drink Jackson's health before he goes," he said, genially—"health and long life, and prosperity in the new career that lies before him. I am sure we all most sincerely wish——"

"One moment," interposed Jackson, quietly. He had grown a little pale. Something in Belle's eyes, as she leaned forward with parted lips as if about to call out, had made him half turn in his chair, and he was aware that Dick was standing close behind him. "Please excuse me interrupting you, but I should just like to mention something that has been rather worrying me all night. It was a conversation I had with Patterson, the agent who sold my property."

"Let us hear about it, by all means," said Ponsonby, blandly.

"The fellow puzzled me. I can't understand what he was driving at. Perhaps you can help me. When I called for the money I happened to mention that I was coming to dine with you, and he immediately said that he was very busy, and asked if it would be convenient for me to call for the money again on my way to the train. He lives above his office, which is in King Street, a few yards from the station, and of course it would be no trouble to call. Still, I was not altogether pleased, and it was only when he made a sort of personal favour of it that I consented. I mentioned that the arrangement would necessitate me leaving here sooner than I had intended, and that I naturally wished to spend as much time as possible with you. 'Oh, that'll be all right,' he said. 'Tell Mr. Ponsonby all about it, and say it's entirely my fault, and I'm sure he'll be good enough to excuse you.' I thought that rather impertinent of him, and came away in a bit of a huff. I've felt a trifle uneasy about it all the evening. He seemed to have something on his mind that for some reason or other he didn't wish to express too plainly. Yet I've no doubt it's all right. I feel confident he wouldn't try to trick me out of the money. He has the reputation of being well-off and perfectly straightforward."

There are times when the most consummate actor in life's drama loses his assurance. Ponsonby's face blanched. He made a desperate attempt to light a cigarette, but his trembling fingers betrayed him, and he instantly abandoned it. Not only had his scheme proved a complete fiasco, but he and the others knew that this slight, quiet-voiced, gentle-eyed man had found them out and knew them for what they were. Yet, owing to this arrangement with the agent, they dare not injure a hair of his head. He sat there as safe as if surrounded by police. And this Patterson? Who was he? What did he know? With an immense effort Ponsonby recovered his self-control.

"Really, I hardly know the man," he said, "except by name and sight. He has the reputation, I believe, of being a good man of business. Do you know anything about him yourself?"

"Not very much. Well, I know one thing. He wishes it to be kept quiet, I understand, but I am sure I may tell you. He was at one time a detective."

An inarticulate exclamation escaped from Mrs. Ponsonby. She rose and went hurriedly out of the room. Dick, who had mechanically opened the door for her, followed her. Even Ponsonby realized that the game was played out, but he played it to the last.

"I'm afraid my wife is not feeling very well," he said. "Will you kindly ecxuse me for a moment? Please don't go. I shall be back in a second. I'm sorry to take Belle away, but I'm afraid she will be required to attend to her mother. Come, Belle."

Belle looked up at him with the terror that comes into the eyes of a dog when it sees the uplifted whip in its master's hand. The look he gave her as she shrank away from him made Jackson's blood boil.

"Pardon me," he said, "but if you can spare Miss Ponsonby for a few moments I should like to have a word or two with her."

"I'm sorry, but you must really excuse me," replied Ponsonby. "She can return in a few minutes, but it is imperative that she should render whatever assistance her mother may require."

Jackson rose to his feet.

"I have told you," he said, with flashing eyes and a startling assumption of authority, "that I wish to speak to Miss Ponsonby alone. Will you be good enough to leave the room?"

in the past, enabled him to control himself. The game was up. He was in Jackson's power, and Jackson knew it. His only chance was to trust to Belle's loyalty.

"SHE SHRANK AWAY FROM HIM."

For a moment Ponsonby hesitated. His face had flushed a dull red, his nostrils were inflated. He was apparently on the verge of a frightful outburst of passion. But the habit of self-command, so essential to his success

After all, he did not believe she would give him away. With a shrug of the shoulders he turned and left the room.

As the door closed behind him Jackson moved towards Belle, who had covered her

face with her hands, her slight figure trembling from head to foot. He laid his hand on her arm.

"Belle," he said, gently.

She shrank away from him.

"Oh, please go," she said, in a choking voice. "Don't speak to me. You know what we are—what—what I am. You must hate—despise me."

He sat down beside her and took one of the trembling hands in his.

"Do you know why I came here to-night—why I came here in the past?" he asked. "I never liked Ponsonby—though I never even suspected until to-night that he was what I now know him to be. I came because I cared for you, as I never cared, and never shall care, for anyone else. I did not ask you to become my wife because I thought you would never consent to leave what appeared to be a life of ease and luxury to share the fortunes of one who is going to make his way in a new country, and may have to face a good deal of hardship and anxiety. But after what has happened to-night I do ask you."

"You—you really mean this?" she asked, and the incredulity, the humility with which she regarded him seemed to Jackson, in the case of this brilliant and beautiful girl, inexpressibly pathetic.

"From my very heart I do," he said, earnestly; "and I beg and implore you to come away with me now. I cannot and will not leave you here alone, at the mercy of those cruel, unscrupulous men and that odious, malignant woman. Even if you were not all you are to me I could not do it. I can guess what was in the glass you warned me not to drink out of, and I am absolutely certain that you saved my life to-night at the risk of your own. Do you think I am going to leave you with them after that? You must come away with me at once. We can be married by special licence in London to-morrow. Leave these people and this life I know you loathe, and if it lies in my power to make you happy, God knows you shall never regret having done so."

"And you—you can trust me—now that you know what I am—the life I have led—to be a good wife to you?"

"I can trust you implicitly. You care for me a little, Belle, don't you?"

"I care for you so much that I—I am afraid of spoiling your life—afraid that you may be sorry you asked me."

"I shall never be that. You do not know—I cannot express in words how happy you have made me. Do you wish to speak to your father before we go?"

"Ponsonby! He is not my father. His wife is my aunt, and Dick is her son by a previous marriage. They professed to adopt me when my parents died and I was left alone in the world. When I first came to live with them I had not a suspicion of the truth. It was not until I discovered that they were using me to—to attract and entertain the people they tricked and swindled that I began to suspect. I tried again and again to escape, and could not—dare not. They threatened me, terrified me—told me I had gone too far—was as guilty in the eyes of the law as they were. I was so lonely—so—so helpless—oh, you cannot realize what I have gone through!"

"But it is all over now—done with for ever. Try not to think of it. It will only distress you."

"Ah, but you don't understand. I want you to know everything. I was beginning—I know I was—to grow like them. I had lost all hope. There was no one to help me. What could I do? In a little while I should have been as wicked and unscrupulous as they are. Now you know all. Are you sure, quite sure, you will never be sorry?"

"Quite sure. Come, dear, we must go."

He led her to the door and opened it. No one was visible, but the murmur of voices could be heard in an adjoining room. She hurriedly put on a hat and cloak that were hanging in the hall. Jackson dispensed with all formalities. There was no knowing what desperate men with their backs against the wall, furious with disappointment, might be capable of doing. He opened the outer door noiselessly, drew the trembling girl's arm through his, and together they went out into the night.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

VIEWED BY SIR HENRY LUCY.

(NEW SERIES.)

Illustrated by E. T. Reed.

A NEW PHASE IN THE LONG-SPEECH CONTROVERSY.

THERE was a passage in the authorized form and order of the Coronation Service which members of the House of Commons, thronged in Westminster Abbey last month, wistfully regarded. "At the end of the Creed," so the ordinance runs, "one of the Bishops shall be ready in the pulpit placed against the pillar in the north-east corner of the Theatre, and begin the sermon, *which is to be short.*" If the letter and the spirit of that injunction might dominate proceedings of the House of Commons, how much better worth living would Parliamentary life be? As usual with a newly-elected House, the monstrosity of the length of speeches has been much discussed. In course of time, as eels get used to being skinned, so members become inured to the ordeal of long speeches. New members acutely feel the infliction, and for the first time in history the Session has seen organized effort to combat it. Since I touched on this subject in February a committee has been privily formed, charged with the mission of shortening the length of speeches. Its almost childish innocence was displayed in its earliest step, which took the direction of endeavouring to form a compact by which subscribers should undertake to shorten their own speeches. That, of course, is not the thing at all. Individual desire unanimously flows in the direction of wishing to see other men's speeches reduced in length by a minimum of one-half.

THE RED LAMP.

In this matter voluntary effort would be unavailing. The time saved by the self-discipline of a few honourable men would be appropriated by non-unionists for the extension of their own speeches. Reform, to be effectual, must be brought about by hard and fast rule administered under the authority of the Chair. When the Duma was established at St. Petersburg a simple device dealt with the plague of prolixity. On a member rising to address the House a red lamp was simultaneously ignited on his desk. At the end of ten minutes it went out, and the orator was compelled forthwith to resume his seat. The lives of successive Dumas have been so brief and exciting that no record has

"A COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FORMED CHARGED WITH THE MISSION OF SHORTENING THE LENGTH OF SPEECHES."

been published of the success or otherwise of this experiment. The matter is well worth inquiring into by the committee that has taken the business in hand at Westminster. The fact that there are no desks for members in the House of Commons is an initial difficulty in the way of adopting the scheme. If it has proved a success it might be adapted in other form.

It must be gratefully admitted that, compared with the fashion in vogue thirty years ago, the plague of long speeches has appreciably abated. In the assembly among which Disraeli and Gladstone were numbered as young men a speech of an hour's duration was regarded as a curiosity of reticence. It is a familiar fact that Gladstone occupied five hours in the exposition of one of his earlier Budgets. Two years ago Mr. Lloyd George, having grafted upon his financial scheme something like half-a-dozen stupendous legislative proposals, spoke for a period approaching the same length, but completed his task only with the assistance of an interval for rest and refreshment.

At the epoch referred to Gladstone's famous pomatum-pot was—if the trope be permissible—hidden in the bosom of the future. A glass of water served him for all refreshment. Old habit clinging to him, he was later personally responsible for the custom of extended speech-making prevalent so recently as the 'eighties. He also preserved the antique fashion of the exordium, the peroration, and the classical quotation. Some of his perorations, lofty in tone, musical in phrase, lengthy in form, are at this day prized possessions of the language. As I pointed out in earlier reference to this always-burning question, nobody now indulges in the House of Commons in a peroration. As for a classical quotation, the Labour members simply wouldn't stand it. From a period so recent as Mr. Gladstone's withdrawal from the scene the style of debate has appreciably altered. It is less oratorical, and therefore more businesslike.

JOB'S EXPERIENCE.

Nevertheless, there remains the indisputable fact that owing to the inordinate length of speeches only a small proportion of members desiring to take part in debate manage to catch the Speaker's eye. The evil is to be grappled with only by the operation of a short, sharp rule limiting the duration of speech. There are few men, even in the present Parliament, who have more useful matter to communicate than may be set forth within the space of ten minutes. Amongst the afflictions that fell upon Job, worse than the assault of the Sabeans, crueller than the Chaldeans, more woeful than the great wind from the wilderness that smote the four corners of the house of his eldest son, was the length of the remarks of his comforters. Happy would Job have been, in spite of his boils, had he been able to move the closure when Bildad the Shuhite followed Eliphaz the Temanite, with Zophar the Naamathite lurking below the Gangway ready to chime in.

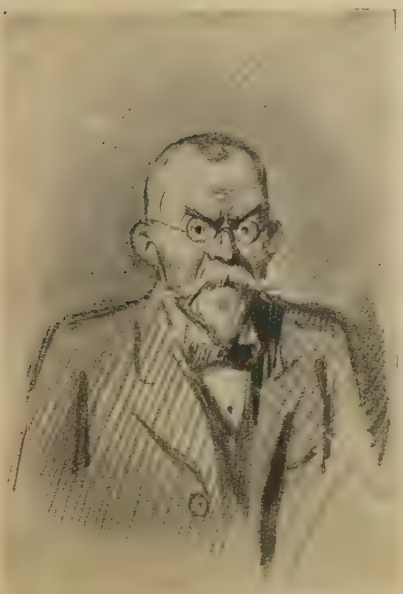
THE TEN MINUTES RULE.

It happens that among the Standing Orders one presents a useful object-lesson upon this important question. It is known as the Ten Minutes Rule, chiefly because it makes no reference to that limit of time. What it directs is that a Minister or unofficial member in charge of a Bill may introduce it immediately after the Question hour, on condition that he explains its provisions in a speech of moderate length. One other member may follow, under the same restraining condition. Whereafter the Bill may be brought in and read a first time. Whilst the particular measure suffers no disadvantage, the saving of time is considerable. Under the old order of things, especially when obstruction was systematized, a whole night might be given up to debate on the first reading of a Bill whose clauses members discussing it had not yet enjoyed the opportunity of reading.

This testimony to the efficacy of arbitrary limitation of speech-making is invaluable. Nothing practical will come of the agitation of the current Session. It has been familiar in the early days of former Parliaments. To appeals addressed to him Mr. Asquith makes answer that paraphrases the reply of former Prime Ministers. If, he says, general feeling on the part of the House is displayed in favour of taking action in the matter he will be willing to give effect to it. And there the matter rests till a new Parliament meets, and business men fresh to the scene marvel at the method under which the affairs of the Empire struggle along.

MR. GINNELL TAKES THE FLOOR.

Another grievance born afresh with the new Parliament is the alleged unfairness of allocation of the right to speak. It was dramatically brought to the fore on the opening day of the Session by an Irish member, who felt himself specially aggrieved. He declared that through a whole Parliament, in spite of constant en-



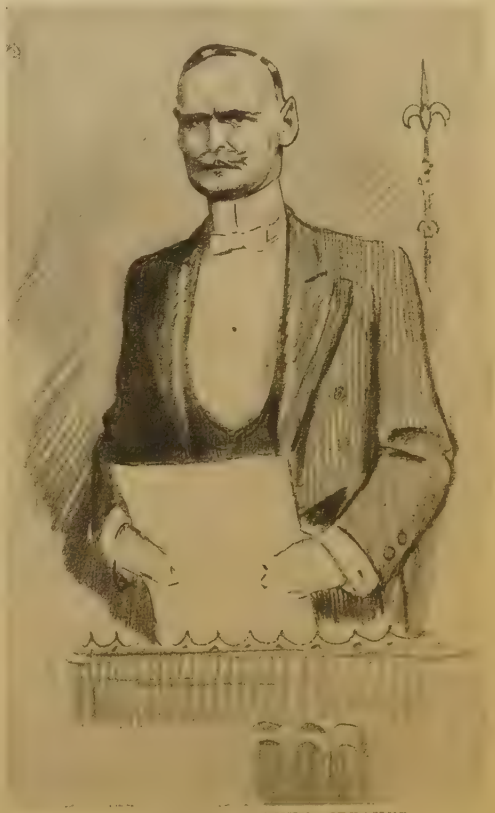
"MR. GINNELL DECLARED THAT THROUGH A WHOLE PARLIAMENT HE HAD NOT SUCCEEDED IN CATCHING THE SPEAKER'S EYE."

deavour, he had not once succeeded in catching the Speaker's eye. (The life of the Parliament chanced to have been comprised within a single Session. That was a detail the complainant was not compelled voluntarily to bring to the front.) There was something delightfully humorous in the situation. The Speaker-Elect was in his place, waiting to be led to the Chair by the mover and seconder of the Resolution that selected him as its officer. As they rose to perform their pleasant duty, up got Mr. Ginnell to unfold his tale of woe. The opportunity comes only once in the history of a Parliament. At the moment there was no Mace on the Table, no Speaker in the Chair, no form of vested authority. As someone must needs do something in the way of a friendly lead, the Clerk at the Table was, as usual, allowed to take charge of the proceedings. But so jealous of its privileges is the House that the Clerk, being technically a stranger, was not permitted to open his mouth even to pronounce the name of a member. In successively calling upon the mover and seconder of the Resolution to address the House, he dumbly pointed a forefinger at each.

Mr. Ginnell did not even wait for the friendly forefinger to be turned in his direction. He was absolute master of the situation. He could not be closured or suspended, or ordered to resume his seat after being thrice warned of irrelevance. Nor was he subjected to any other of the penalties that might have been inflicted upon him had he caught the Speaker's eye on one of the occasions when he lamented failure. If the shade of Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar haunts the Chamber he once adorned, it must have been racked with jealousy at the opportunity invented and enjoyed by a compatriot.

THE SPEAKER AND THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Nothing would surprise the House of Commons more if some day, being in Committee, the Speaker were to step in and take part in current debate. Yet abstention from such a course is of modern date. Mr. Denison, Speaker of the House of Commons up to December 10th, 1868, frequently exercised what is actually the right of the present Speaker of speaking and voting in Committee. On June 9th, 1870, Mr. Lowe's Budget being in Committee of Ways and Means, the Speaker was one of a majority of four who defeated the Government in the Division Lobby. Mr. Denison was the last Speaker to exercise this right. But till a recent date the Deputy-Speaker (Chairman of Ways and



MR. EMMOTT, DEPUTY-SPEAKER.
(Chairman of Ways and Means.)

Means) both spoke and voted upon questions coming before the fully-constituted House.

It is characteristic of the stern impartiality of the present Speaker, Mr. Lowther, that whilst he held the office now admirably filled by Mr. Emmott he abstained from voting when the Speaker was in the Chair. This example has been scrupulously followed by his successor at the Table, and it is not probable that the precedent will ever be broken.

The difference in the appointment and position of the Chairman of Ways and Means compared with that of the Speaker is so broadly marked as to make this abstention a little extreme in the delicacy of feeling that suggested it. Whilst the Speaker occupies a position akin to that of the Judicial Bench, requiring absolute abstention from anything approaching political bias or party feeling, the post of Chairman of Committees has always been recognized as the reward of faithful party service. Preserving impartial attitude whilst presiding over debate, on leaving the Table the Chairman relapses into the position of a private member, in untrammelled enjoyment of a private member's rights and privileges. Before Mr. Lowther's time the Party Whip certainly counted upon the Chairman's vote, and invariably got it. With a small majority such as that which supported Mr. Gladstone in the short Parliament of 1892, the loss of two votes owing to the abstention from the Division Lobby of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, both being before their elevation stout Liberals, might at particular crises have been a serious matter. At the present time, Mr. Lowther being almost the only, if not absolutely the sole, Tory in the House, and Mr. Emmott living up to the faith of a Liberal, the two are practically paired. Thus it comes to pass that whilst tender consciences remain unoffended, the majorities are not affected.

DR. KENEALY'S MANE.

In a speech delivered in his first Session in the House of Commons, Dr. Kenealy, referring to what he described as calumnious reflections on his character, declared in tragic voice, "I shall shake them off as the lion shakes the dewdrops

"IT WOULD, PERHAPS, BE TOO FUNNY TO HAVE THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE MINISTERIAL CITADEL."

from his mane." The prolonged burst of laughter with which the House greeted this flight of fancy was echoed throughout the country when Parliamentary reports were circulated. It remains to this day a classic among House of Commons' phrases.

Reading again the memoirs of the publishing house of Murray, I come upon a case curiously parallel. S. T. Coleridge, writing to John Murray under date 26th March, 1817, complains of attacks upon him by the *Quarterly Review*. "Thank God," he exclaims, "these things pass from me like drops of water from a duck's back."

This somewhat lacks the majesty of Kenealy's simile. Deficiency is made up by a delightful mixing of metaphor. "Except," the poet adds, "as far as they take the bread out of my mouth." The simile of water running over a man's back, *en route* taking the bread out of his mouth, is a fancy that should have been set forth in verse.

"SIR FREDERICK BANBURY AS HE MIGHT HAVE APPEARED."

As a "bull" it does not, however, attain the felicity of the creation with which Mr. O'Shee delighted the House of Commons on a dreary night last April in Committee on the Parliament Bill. The animal appropriately emerged from a farmyard in County Meath, whence the tenant had been evicted for non-payment of rent. Public-spirited neighbours not only saw to it that no new tenant should be forthcoming, but constant depredation was committed upon the farmyard buildings. The result was that they were placed under police protection. Mr. O'Shee, addressing the Chief Secretary, insisted upon knowing at whose cost the police were thus engaged, and why such cost should be incurred on account of a farm "when the only living animals on it are seagulls that fly over it."

Up to the present time of writing that is the best Irish bull born since the death of Sir Boyle Roche withdrew from the national stockyard a prolific and successful breeder.

A CITY PRIVILEGE.

In accordance with ancient custom, going back to a period beyond the memory of man, when the House of Commons newly elected meets for its first Session the members for the City of London seat themselves on the Treasury Bench. Since Mr. Arthur Balfour, driven from Lancashire, took refuge in the City the arrangement has lacked completeness. It would, perhaps, be too funny to have the Leader of the Opposition seated for howsoever brief time in the Ministerial citadel. He has accordingly had himself excused. His colleague, Sir Frederick Banbury, not hampered by ex-Ministerial dignity, was found on the Treasury Bench at the opening of this Session, as he has been seen there on many former occasions, whether the fort were held by Liberals or by statesmen of his own political faith.

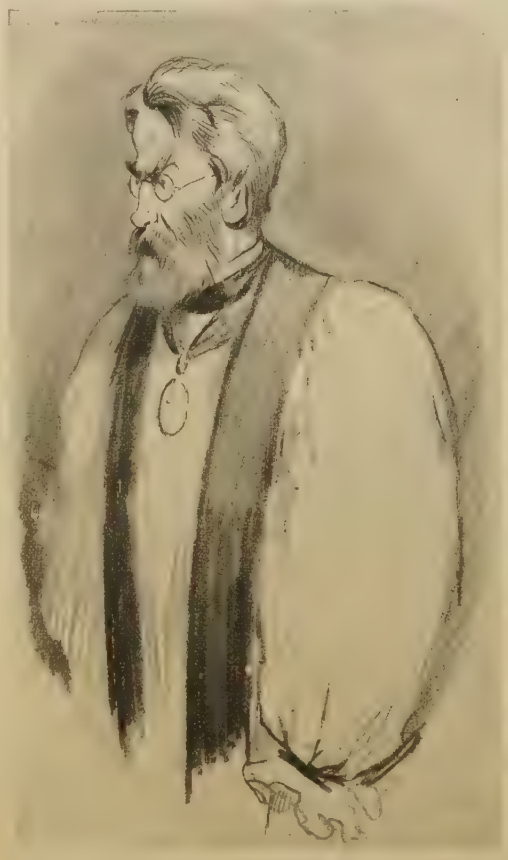
Sir Frederick, however, stops short of reviving the fashion of his long-time predecessors in one respect. When they came down to Westminster they did honour to the City by presenting themselves in mazarine robes and gold chains. In the modern Parliament there is one occasional revival of this courtly custom. It happens when the Lord Mayor of Dublin is also a member of Parliament, and in his former capacity presents a petition at the Bar of the House. Thereafter, taking his usual seat, he still wears

his robes and chain of office, an object of envy to ordinary members.

Up to a date so recent as the passing of the Reform Bill, members of the House of Commons privileged to wear scarves and orders habitually displayed them. I have an engraving of an old picture showing the House of Commons in Session in the year 1821. Nearly all the members wear powdered hair arranged in *queues*, a style preserved to this day only by footmen. Many display the ribbon and star of the particular order to which they belonged. Manners-Sutton, Speaker at the time of the passing of the Reform Bill, wore the red ribbon of the Bath flung across his gown. The only decoration of the kind worn in Parliament to-day is displayed by the Bishop of Winchester, Prelate of the order of the Garter, on whose surplice shines the insignia of his rank.

A LINK WITH PLANTAGENET TIMES.

The custom pertaining to members for the City is pretty well known. Another observed on the opening of every Session is less familiar and is even more hoary in age. An unobtrusive gate opens from Dean's Yard into Great College Street, leading on to the entrance to Westminster Palace. As far back as Plantagenet times it was the custom of the Abbot of Westminster to walk from the Abbey to the Palace to take his seat with laylords at the opening of Parliament. This gate led to the nearest and most private approach to the Palace' and was used for the procession of priests and acolytes who escorted the Abbot on his way. To this day, on the opening of a new Session, the gate is unlocked, though there comes no Abbot in cope and mitre bound for the House of Lords. For the rest of the year it remains locked.



"THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, ON WHOSE SURPLICE SHINES THE INSIGNIA OF HIS RANK."

A PARLIAMENTARY RELIC.

An invariable formula in the Parliamentary Reports tells how through the Session at such an hour "The Speaker took the Chair." There was a time in the history of Parliament when this phrase might be construed literally. When Parliament was dissolved the Speaker, claiming what was admitted to be his perquisite, took the Chair home with him. Lenthall, the Speaker who lives in history for his famous speech in response to King Charles's personal demand for the custody of the Five Members, availed himself of his privilege. In Radley Church, Berkshire, there is to be seen to this day a canopy black with age. It was in its time a portion of the Speaker's Chair in the House of Commons in the reign of Charles I. When Parliament was dissolved Lenthall had the Chair in which he sat through several Parliaments "conveyed" (so the wise call it) to his country house in Berkshire. He presented the canopy to the parish church, where it forms one of the oldest links still extant with the early days of the Mother of Parliaments.

Mr. Macfadyen, Mortal.

By ARTHUR MORRISON.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy, R.I.

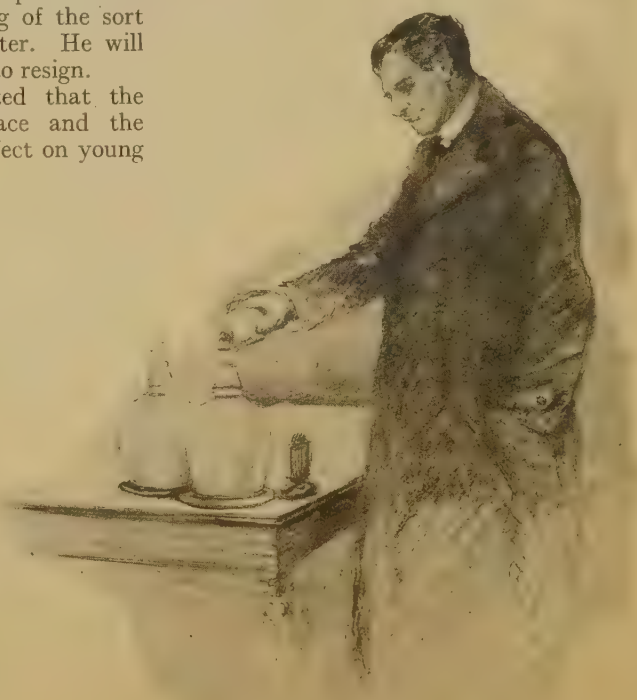
I.

OBVIOUSLY young Phipps should never have been admitted a member of the Mausoleum Club. He was the only member one could readily call to mind who had any hair whatever on the crown of his head, and the only human being who had ever committed the outrage of whistling (yes, *whistling*) on the staircase of that solemn institution. As a matter of fact, he passed the committee simply as the son of his father, the great Sir Mumplebury Phipps, the palæographer. It would be a great blow to his father if young Phipps were expelled from the Mausoleum; but something of the sort is sure to happen sooner or later. He will be fortunate if he is only asked to resign.

It might have been expected that the somnolent dignity of the place and the members would have had its effect on young Phipps; and so it did, but it was quite the wrong effect. It stung him into excesses of misbehaviour, such as he would probably never have contemplated in any less portentous environment. He was constantly exposed to the temptation to do something atrocious and see what would happen. Mind—I am not offering excuses for young Phipps; I am merely explaining.

His worst outrage was never distinctly traced to him by the committee, but——! It was something so very shocking that I would rather not mention it; but that happens to be the only way of explaining what followed. I will just say, then, hurriedly and without painful detail, that early one evening he secreted *gin* in a flat bottle under his coat and entered the smoking-room at a moment when it was empty. Two freshly-filled water-carafes stood there, and these he took and partly emptied into a ventilating pipe; he then divided the contents of the gin-bottle between the two carafes and replaced them carefully where he had found them. That was all.

Now, as it happened, this was the first evening for many years that Mr. Priscian Macfadyen had spent at the club; and the



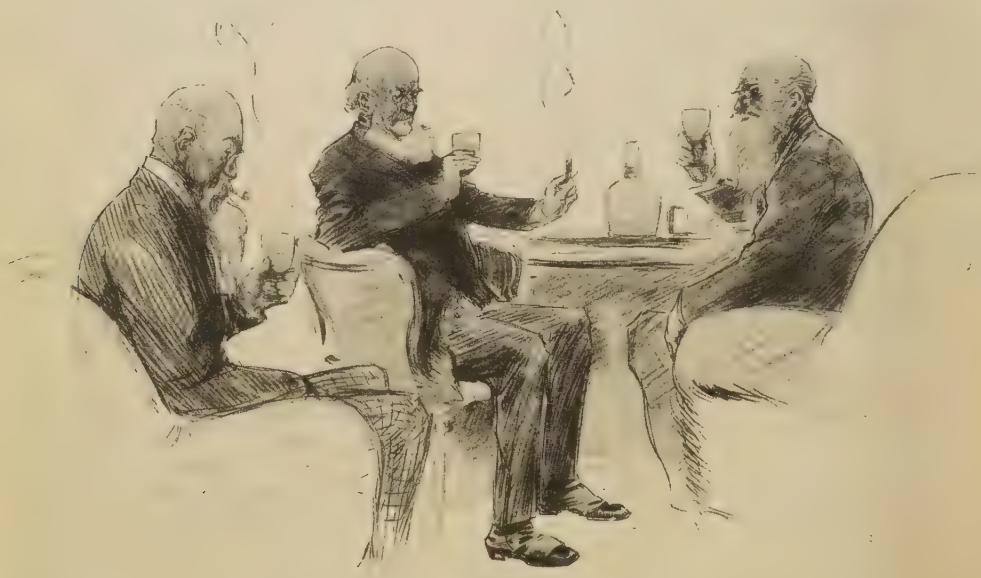
"HE THEN DIVIDED THE CONTENTS OF THE GIN-BOTTLE BETWEEN THE TWO CARAFES."

reason was that this was the first night for many years that Mrs. Macfadyen had been away from home without her husband. She had been sent for, in fact, by a sister who had been taken ill; and as she had not positively extracted a pledge from Mr. Macfadyen that he would stay at home, that dutiful husband thought there could be no positive objection to the exceedingly mild diversion of an evening at the Mausoleum, and no absolute need to report the fact to Mrs. Macfadyen on her return. It was a sad thing—a tragedy, as you will see—that on the occasion of Mr. Macfadyen's first evening at the club for years there should be gin in the water-bottle.

Three tumblers were brought, with a little brandy at the bottom of each, and one of the treacherous water-bottles was placed at hand. Mr. Jeeves, after a sniff and a slight sip of the undiluted brandy, added a generous helping from the water-bottle, and pronounced the result quite extraordinary.

"This is really a brandy of very remarkable quality," he said, "with a character quite its own. Somehow the water seems to bring out the flavour."

Bowker agreed, and resolved to speak to the secretary about getting some of that same brandy for his private store. And Mr. Priscian Macfadyen, with glowing interior and blinking eyes, approved of the cigar and the brandy, and Bowker, and Jeeves, and the



"'THIS IS REALLY A BRANDY OF VERY REMARKABLE QUALITY,' HE SAID."

In the smoking-room Mr. Macfadyen met his old friend Bowker, whom he had not seen for a very long time; because Bowker was a bachelor and spent every evening at the club. Bowker had very good cigars of his own, which he preferred to those kept on the premises. Mr. Bradley Jeeves, another old acquaintance, also liked Bowker's cigars. So these three elderly contemporaries sat together with three of Bowker's cigars between them; and, partly because they were of a generation before the coming into fashion of whisky, and partly because of certain restrictions of Mr. Bowker's doctor, they resolved on three glasses of weak brandy and water; especially as Jeeves had been told of an excellent new brandy just arrived in the club cellars.

circumstances generally—but particularly the brandy.

"There's a certain curious silkiness—yes, I think silkiness is the only word—about this brandy," said Mr. Bowker, critically, "that is positively extraordinary." He took a good mouthful, and swallowed it with lingering approval. "Excellent!" he went on, "quite excellent! It's very far from being my usual habit, but it's very tempting, and I really think I must have another."

So they had another, all three, and from a far corner the diaboiical Phipps, entrenched behind a newspaper, watched the fell result of his revolting machinations.

Let us, with a truly and genuinely respectable shudder, draw a veil over the rest of that

evening's transactions ; a veil thick enough to conceal the fact whether or not those three unoffending and most proper elderly gentlemen, under the stimulus of the first two, had another glass apiece, or even more. A veil that will permit no glimpse of the confused oscillations of three exceedingly pink scalps as viewed from the top of the Mausoleum staircase at their departure very late in the evening indeed. A veil that will reveal nothing of the panic amazement of the decorous hall-porter, nothing of the rumours of musical efforts in the fresh air of the street, nothing of suggested explanations before the committee.

II.

Mr. Bowker awoke very late next morning with a double-elephant headache and a very doubtful remembrance as to how he had acquired it. His man was gathering up his clothes, striding after them about the room in a subtly irritating manner which Mr. Bowker strongly resented. The fellow was under notice, and since he had received it his manner had grown less respectful each day.

Mr. Bowker noticed that there was a good deal of mud on the clothes, and he began to wonder as to the manner of his home-coming.

"Wade!" he said.

"Sir."

"I—I was rather late home last night."

"This mornin', sir," corrected Wade.

"But you didn't wait up after twelve, I suppose?"

"No, sir." Mr. Bowker was vastly relieved till the man added, "But I got up to let you in, sir."

"Not necessary," snapped Mr. Bowker—"not at all necessary."

"Beggin' pardon, sir, I found it very necessary."

A very insolent scoundrel, reflected Mr. Bowker, between the throbs of headache. But he would very much like to remember—— There was some talk of a new brandy at the club—he could recollect that perfectly ; and Macfadyen was there. But beyond that everything was the blankest of possible blanks. The new brandy must have been uncommonly bad. What *had* happened? He must try Wade again. "I don't feel very well this morning, Wade," he remarked.

"Indeed, sir? You surprise me, sir."

"Why surprise you?" asked his master, testily.

"You was very 'appy last night, sir—meanin' this mornin', of course. Very 'appy indeed. I never see a gentleman better nourished."

Better nourished? This was sheer impudence. And yet—— Mr. Bowker was a bachelor, but no bishop, no archbishop, could be more respectable than Mr. Bowker. It would be well, perhaps, to bear with the fellow till he revealed a little more.

"I took something that seriously disagreed with me last night, Wade," he said.

"Very likely, sir, I should think. You wasn't thinkin' of a watch an' chain, sir, was you, or a gold ring?"

"Watch and chain? Gold ring? What do you mean?'

"Only these here, sir. They was in your overcoat-pocket with this purse. I 'aven't ever seen 'em before."

And Wade, with a calmly deferential impudence, displayed before his master's eyes a wholly strange gold watch and chain, a signet-ring, and a purse.

"In my overcoat-pocket?" gasped Mr. Bowker.

"Yessir. They came tumblin' out when I brushed it."

Mr. Bowker fell into a sweat of apprehension. What had he done? Where had he been? He must have robbed somebody!

There was triumph in Wade's eye as he observed the obvious consternation of his master. He stood a picture of malicious satisfaction while Mr. Bowker, with trembling hands, snatched and opened the purse in search for some mark of identification. There were several sovereigns in it, and a half-sovereign; but no paper, no initial—nothing to give a hint of the rightful owner.

It was a horrible situation. Many years ago, when Mr. Bowker was a young man, there *had* been occasions when he had found it difficult to recall the events of the previous evening. He had been active, high-spirited—less decorous than now ; but his wildest escapade fell a world short of this. Never had he been confronted with anything like the ghastly difficulty that faced him now—the possession of a watch and chain, a ring, and a purse that were obviously the rightful property of some other person, and could only have been acquired dishonestly—perhaps by violence.

He pulled himself together as well as his shattered condition permitted, and requested a weak brandy and soda.

"Yes, sir," replied Wade ; "nothing like an 'air o' the dawg that bit you."

The impudent scoundrel was presuming on what he had seen and conjectured, and his master felt himself helpless.

"By the way," he said, suddenly, on the

impulse of a bright thought, "are you sure it was my overcoat, Wade?"

"Oh, yes, sir. The *coat's* yours all right. You won't get into no trouble over the *coat*."

The man was growing insufferable, and Mr. Bowker was positively afraid to resent it. "Ha, hum! That will do, Wade," he said, as loftily as possible. "I'll ring if I want you. I—ah—I shall attend to the matter of—ah—these things during the day. Meantime, of course, I shall expect you to say nothing about it to anybody."

"No, sir—certainly not, sir," replied Wade, with an oily grimace that almost included a wink. He paused in the doorway and repeated, "Certainly not, sir. I sha'n't say a word—so long as I remain in your service, sir."

Mr. Bowker groaned in spirit. The fellow was plainly threatening to give him away unless kept in his employ. But something must be done, and done quickly, to ascertain what had happened last night. The police might even be on the look-out for him at that very moment!

He dressed and made his best attempt at breakfast. Then, with that shameful plunder again in his coat-pocket, he set out to call on Mr. Macfadyen, desperately striving as he went to recall some fragment of last night's adventures.

But it was useless. He could remember nothing after the second trial of the curiously seductive new brandy. He might have gone anywhere and done anything.

Mr. Macfadyen lived just where you would have expected to find a bald-headed fungologist of Erastian tendencies—in Bloomsbury, in the most respectably ordinary house of the most respectably ordinary square to be found in that parish.

Yes, Mr. Macfadyen was at home, but engaged just at present, explained the man who opened the door, with some mystery. Would Mr. Bowker please step in?

Mr. Bowker did so, and as the door closed behind him he was aware of skirts on the landing above the lower stair-flight. This was awkward. Mrs. Macfadyen must have returned sooner than was expected.

"Mr. Bowker, is it you?" said the lady. "You've heard of our trouble, then—very kind of you to come. Won't you come up?"

What "trouble" was this? Mr. Bowker had never for a moment anticipated an encounter with Mrs. Macfadyen, whom he held somewhat in awe, as did other of her husband's friends. It would certainly be out of the question to enter into any discussion of last night's proceedings in presence of Mrs. Macfadyen. As it was, he was supposed to be aware of some trouble which had fallen on the house of Macfadyen, and to be so kind as to call in consequence. Here was something to excuse his presence, if only he knew what it was.

He soon learned. Mrs. Macfadyen led the way to a dressing-room where Mr. Macfadyen, looking vastly perturbed and extraordinarily uncomfortable, stood in consultation with a stranger.

"Oh, good morning, Bowker," said Mr. Macfadyen, rather hurriedly. "We—we haven't seen much of you lately. Wondered what had become of you. We've had a little burglary here—nothing to speak of—thing I shouldn't have taken much notice of myself."

"No, he wouldn't," observed Mrs. Macfadyen, severely. "He didn't even want to call in the police. But, of course, I insisted on that, and Sergeant Pike here thinks he has a clue already."

"How did it occur?"

"It *seems*," answered Mr. Macfadyen, hastening to explain, "that the thief must have climbed on to the study roof just below here, and reached in at the open window. He could easily take anything from the dressing-table like that."

"Did he take much?"

"Priscian's watch and chain," said Mrs. Macfadyen, with a precise emphasis, "his signet-ring, and his purse with money in it. And he calls it nothing to speak of!"

Something sprang up into Mr. Bowker's throat, turned over, and fell into his chest again. "A—a gold watch?" he managed to say.

"His gold watch that cost him fifty guineas at Dent's, and a thick curb chain. And he wasn't even going to call the police!"

This was quite terrible. This climb over from the mews and up to the window was just what Mr. Bowker might have done—in pure sport—in his college days; but now! What in the world could have possessed him to behave so? And Sergeant Pike thought he had a clue!

"The sergeant says it is obviously somebody who knows the place," observed Mrs. Macfadyen. "That's so much to the good."

Mr. Bowker's mouth was drier and stickier than ever. This escapade had probably seemed rather amusing last night; but now! The views of sixty-five are not as the views of twenty-five. This was no "lark."

"What *I* want to know is, how much a burglar would have to take before Priscian would call it serious," was Mrs. Macfadyen's next contribution to the case.

"Oh, of course, my dear, I don't say it isn't serious," replied Mr. Macfadyen, with anxious conciliation. "But then it might be much more serious for the burglar if he were caught. We mustn't lose sight of the humani-

"There, you see Mr. Bowker agrees with me," said Mr. Macfadyen. "And as to its being intended as a joke, what could be more likely? The humour of the lower classes is genuine, though crude."

"Stuff and nonsense!" replied Mrs. Macfadyen.

"The chief difficulty," said Sergeant Pike, "is the umbrella."

"'THE FARE WAS PAID IN ADVANCE,' THE CABMAN REPEATED, 'BUT YOU DIDN'T REMEMBER IT, SIR, YOU WAS THAT MORTAL!'"

tarian aspect of the case. He may have a starving wife and family. Don't you think so, Bowker?"

"Very probable indeed, I should think," assented Mr. Bowker, readily. "In fact, the —the whole case seems to suggest it. And he—he may have only intended it as a joke."

"The umbrella?" interjected Mr. Bowker, a little puzzled.

"Yes," said the detective. "There's an umbrella missing, as well. You didn't put that on the dressing-table, too, did you?"

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Macfadyen, with some stiffness. "I assure you I am quite incapable of such an act."

"Just so, sir. Nobody'd ever believe such a thing of you, I'm sure. But there's the difficulty. If the thief stood on the study roof and reached in at this window and got the things off the table, how did he get the umbrella out of the hall downstairs? Especially with you sleeping here in the bedroom with the door locked."

"*That* clue," said Mr. Macfadyen, decidedly, "obviously points to a thief of great cunning and resource; and perhaps with so much more obvious and easily-detected crime going on about us, and crying out for attention, it might be as well to waste no more time on this difficult case—at any rate for the present. Um? Eh?"

"Why, no, sir. There are other things to consider. There are finger-marks, for instance, on the polished top of this table, and, especially distinct, on the silver backs of the brushes. You see, they're quite clear when you hold 'em up to the light. Now, there's nothing more certain than the finger-print clue. If you'll just look at this clear system of lines, gentlemen, and compare them with any other—your own, for instance—you'll perceive that the difference is quite extraordinary."

By some common impulse, both Mr. Bowker and Mr. Macfadyen plunged their hands deep in their pockets at this point, and the sergeant's exposition was interrupted by the appearance of the man who had admitted Mr. Bowker.

"There's a four-wheeler at the door, sir," said the man, "an' the cabman says he wants to see you. He's got your umbrella, and he says he won't give it to anybody but you; and he's as deaf as a post, and I can't make him understand anything!"

"I'll go!" said Mr. Macfadyen, making a dash at the door.

"So will I!" said Mrs. Macfadyen, with a sudden steely gleam of eye, dashing too.

But the cabman was there already, and pushed past the servant. He was such an elderly man as only grows on the box of a four-wheeler, of a species now all but extinct. His face was bristly and crimson, with touches of purple, his voice struggled through the sediment of long-forgotten fogs, and he did not spare it.

"Pardon, lady; pardon, gents. I s'pose I was meant to come up, but 'e don't speak loud an' I'm 'ard of 'earin'." He stepped farther into the room, extending a silver-handled umbrella toward Mr. Macfadyen.

"I'm a honest man," he announced. "A honest man."

"Certainly — thank you — I'm much obliged," said Mr. Macfadyen. But the cabman heard nothing and proceeded.

"When I brought you 'ome last night from Pall Mall this 'ere genelman paid the fare—in adwance." He pointed with the umbrella at Mr. Bowker.

"From Pall Mall!" remarked Mrs. Macfadyen, with the steel in her voice now as well as in her eye. "This is certainly news to me!"

"From the club, my dear," explained Mr. Macfadyen. "I—I forgot to mention it, in the excitement of the—ah—burglary!"

"The fare was paid in adwance," the cabman repeated, "but you didn't remember it, sir, you was that mortal!"

"That *what?*" And even the deaf cabman understood the scandalized prance of Mrs. Macfadyen.

"Mortal," he repeated, placidly, a little louder. "'E was that mortal 'e couldn't understand the fare was paid, and as 'e 'adn't got no money 'e made me take his umbrella. Now, I'm a honest man. When I was a-'elpin' 'im with 'is latchkey I might 'a' pinched anythink out o' the 'all, but not me! There ain't many could say that, could they? But I'm a honest man. Anybody might 'a' felt it a dooty to keep the umbrella arter what 'ad 'appened, but not me! I'm a honest man. I don't say but what I've bin an' lost a hour or so this mornin' a-comin' 'ere, an' any gent as was a gent would make it a quid at least, but that's neither 'ere nor there. I'm a honest man, an' I leave it to the genelman 'isself!"

There was a horrid pause, and nobody dared look in Mrs. Macfadyen's direction. Mr. Bowker, from behind her, shook his fist and made furious dumb show at the conscientious cabman.

"Why, sir," pursued that paragon, surprised at this demonstration, "sure*ly you* remember it? You was pretty mortal yourself, but not as mortal as this genelman. You knew summat, you did. Why, when you took care of 'is watch an' chain an' ring an' puss afore you shoved 'im in the cab, I says to meself, 'E knows summat, 'e do,' I says. 'E's bin there afore, many a time,' says I." The man of probity beamed affably on the company as one desirous of promoting cheerfulness. "An' what I say is," he added, "what's the odds if the gent *was* mortal? 'E ain't the only one, is 'e?"

"We are all mortal," faltered Mr. Macfadyen.

"You was last night, any'ow!" rapped out the cabman, promptly, with a deaf man's

perverse turn of hearing. He grinned and shook his head roguishly, with a wink at Mrs. Macfadyen. "But there, I do like a gent as is open-'anded when 'e's mortal. Why, you'd 'a' give away everythink if the other gent 'adn't collared 'em! You offered yer watch an' chain to the club porter!"

Mr. Bowker interposed, rather uncertain of tone, but careful not to speak too loud.

"I'm afraid this fellow is far from sober," he said. "It's very sad. It is true, however, that I took care of Mr. Macfadyen's valuables last night for safety. Something had disagreed with him, and he was not at all well."

"I'll never touch Welsh rabbit again!" murmured Mr. Macfadyen. "Never!"

"Here are the things," Mr. Bowker went on. "In the misunderstanding prevailing I—I felt a certain difficulty in doing so before, as you will understand, Mrs. Macfadyen."

Mrs. Macfadyen gathered up the articles with an air that broke the nerve of every male creature present except the cabman.

"Yes," she said, "I quite understand, Mr. Bowker, quite. Pray explain no more!"

But the cabman viewed this tardy restoration of the valuables with amazement. "What!" he exclaimed. "That's a heye-opener, that is! Seems I've give the game away! Well, I'm blowed! Who'd ha' thought of a bloke like *'im* takin' advantage of 'is pal like that! Why, 'e was *a-stickin'* to 'em if I 'adn't bin a honest man an' come along an' told the truth! Never said a word, 'e didn't, not till I'd told the gent who'd 'ad 'is watch! That's a corker, that is! Well, well! It seems I've got back all them things for you, as well as the umbrella. As a honest man I ought to 'ave two quid at least!"

Mr. Bowker strode back to his rooms with darkling brow. "Wade!" he thundered, "come here!"

"Yes, sir!" responded Wade, appearing from the next room with his semi-impudent grin in no whit abated.

"Wade, I believe you're under notice to leave my service?"

"I *was*, sir," smirked Wade, "but under the circumstances——"

"*In* the circumstances, Wade, you're an insolent scoundrel. There's your month's money. Go this instant!"

"THERE'S YOUR MONTH'S MONEY. GO THIS INSTANT!"

Lawn-Tennis Strokes That Pay.

A Symposium of the Opinions of Famous Players on Their Favourite Strokes, and the Best Strokes to Cultivate.

THERE is probably no game in the world in which the possession of even one good, sound stroke proves of so great value to a player from a match-winning point of view as lawn-tennis. Indeed, a number of the most famous players of the day frankly confess that "they only have one really good stroke." And yet the knowledge of how to use that stroke to the best possible advantage has actually won for them championships on more than one occasion.

In order, therefore, to give readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE an accurate idea of the best strokes to cultivate at lawn-tennis, we have collected from various champions and lawn-tennis experts their views on their strongest strokes, and also on the strokes which, in their opinion, are likely to prove of the greatest value on the tennis-court. A careful study of the strokes in question should enable even the most moderate tennis-player to improve his (or her) game considerably in a very short time.

Mrs. Lambert Chambers.

Few players have earned a higher reputation for all-round excellence on the tennis-court than Mrs. Lambert Chambers, better known, perhaps, as Miss Douglas, who first won the Ladies' Championship some eight years ago, since when she has figured as lady champion on three other occasions.

Mrs. Chambers is greatly of the opinion that the fore-hand drive is her strongest stroke. "I have always congratulated myself on my partiality to the fore-hand drive," she says, "because it seems to me that a really reliable fore-hand is one of the most valuable assets of the game. One of the first things to cultivate in the practice of this stroke is a good length. At first it is well not to endeavour to accomplish too severe a shot, for excessive ambition in this respect is apt to lead to inaccuracy. On this account I believe in the practice of a good-length slow ball until absolute accuracy is achieved.

"Once a player attains accuracy, pace and direction are merely a matter of hard work. In bringing a fore-hand drive into play it is best to stand sideways to the net, with the left foot in front of the right and with the left shoulder facing the net. I would point out here that it is a great mistake

MRS. LAMBERT CHAMBERS ABOUT TO BRING INTO PLAY A FORE-HAND DRIVE. [*From Photos. by J. Dexter, Felixstowe.*]

MRS. LAMBERT CHAMBERS'S BEGINNING OF SERVICE.

to rush for the ball, for far better results are obtained by waiting as long as possible, as to try and meet the ball half-way is frequently tantamount to 'asking for trouble.' It is advisable, too, to stand well away from the ball sideways and lengthways.

"Excessive muscular strength is by no means necessary in the attainment of a really sound fore-hand drive, for timing the stroke accurately, and transferring the weight at the right moment, and following well through at the finish, are the real secrets of good and strong strokes. The racquet, I would mention, should be swung slowly back to about the

MRS. LAMBERT CHAMBERS'S MIDDLE OF OVERHEAD SERVICE.
From a Photo. by] *[J. Dexter, Felixstowe.*

level of the shoulder and then brought slowly forward, while at the same time the weight should be transferred from the right foot to the left. I must lay particular stress on this matter of the transference of weight, as it is most important and can only be thoroughly mastered by careful practice."

Mrs. Chambers also attaches great value to a sound service. "I quite realize that an underhand cut service frequently proves exceedingly useful," she says; "but, all the same, as a rule I am a believer in an overhead service. Still, a change of stroke and tactics is invariably valuable, and on that account mastery over both services is to be recommended. So far as service is concerned—the same remark applies, of course, to other strokes as well—'place' is always better than pace, for which reason it is a mistake, I think, for ambitious players to attempt too fast a service at first."

Mr. C. Heirons.

Like Mr. Wilding, the professional tennis-player at Queen's Club, Mr. C. Heirons, who has given some of the finest tennis-players in the country their first lessons, is not a believer in the cultivation of any particular stroke as an aid to victory on the tennis-court.

"I quite admit that one good stroke may frequently prove of enormous value to a tennis-player," he says; "but, at the same time, I think that many players are apt to spoil their game by over-zealous practice of one stroke, and one stroke only. I think that tennis-players cannot do better in their early days than to commence by practising ground strokes and service first, and afterwards follow on with the fore-hand drive, volleying, and back-hand strokes.

"To be a really sound, reliable tennis-player thorough efficiency in back-hand strokes is absolutely essential, for which reason I would advise players to devote particular attention to practising their back-hand strokes. It always seems to me, however, that a common fault many enthusiasts make is to devote too much time to strokes which are really what I think can best be termed 'natural strokes.' The fore-hand drive, for example, is a stroke which suggests itself at once as being a natural stroke, and, this being so, most players 'take to' it at once, because it comes easy to them. On the face of things, however, the strokes to practise most are those which do not at once come easy to a player, and, if only ambitious 'knights of the racquet' would remember this, their game would improve in a surprisingly short time."

Mr. A. F. Wilding.

Mr. A. F. Wilding, the young Colonial tennis player, who won the championship in 1910, is not a believer in the advisability of either endeavouring to make use of any particular individual stroke in preference to others, or of cultivating any individual shots in practice.

"It always seems to me that the only real chance a tennis-player has of attaining first-class ability is to strain every effort to become efficient 'all round,'" he says; "and for that reason I think it is a mistake for players to fix upon one stroke as likely to prove most effective, and then to study that stroke in preference to all others. Personally, ever since I took up tennis seriously—that is to say, ever since I elected to play the game in

preference to other pastimes—I have always tried to rid my play of a suggestion of what I think can best be described as 'one-strokism.'

"Of course, from the very nature of the game, the fore-hand drive suggests itself as being of particular value by reason of the fact that it must inevitably be used so often. Still, I am not at all sure that its value is so enormous as many people profess to believe, for there are lots of other strokes which go equally far to win games on the tennis-court. Thus, I always believe myself that a knowledge of how to volley soundly is essential to the making of a good tennis-player, while real ability at back-hand play should help the enthusiast to go far.

"The weak point in many tennis-players is assuredly their inability to volley accurately. But why is this so? Simply because so few players will take the trouble to learn the game stroke by stroke. Tennis, in many respects, is a game which, so far as the learning of it is concerned, is much like billiards.

"How does the really proficient billiard-player map out his early education? By practising one stroke for weeks and months

MR. A. F. WILDING SERVING. MR. WILDING'S ACCURATE SERVICE IS ONE OF HIS STRONGEST POINTS ON THE TENNIS-COURT.

From a Photo. by "Sport and General."

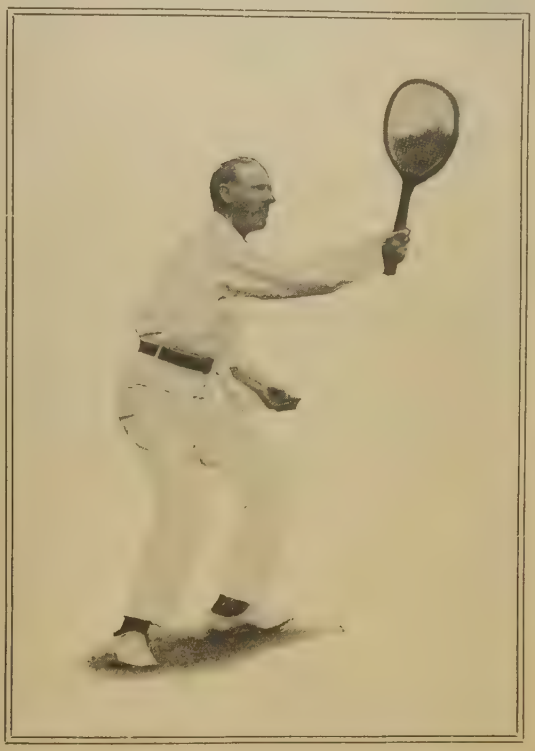
MR. A. F. WILDING'S POWERFUL BACK-HAND RETURN.

From a Photo. by "Sport and General."

at a time until he has thoroughly mastered it, and then taking up the study of some other stroke and doing likewise. And that, in my opinion, is how tennis-players should serve their apprenticeship, for it is only by the careful study of many individual strokes that anything like perfection, or something akin to it, can be reached at lawn-tennis. I think, therefore, that enthusiastic players will improve their game far quicker by practising in friendly games than by continually competing in tournaments. I quite realize, of course, that tournament play is excessively useful in that it helps to make a player versatile. Still, I do not think that it will really improve a player's game very much until a fairly high standard of proficiency on the tennis-court has been reached, for, in their anxiety to win a tournament match, players will lapse into bad habits, and will fail to correct them simply because they have no opportunity of doing so.

"But by continually indulging in friendly practice games tennis-players can 'run over' a shot time after time until they have thoroughly mastered it, without fear of losing a game or of boring the spectators. I should like to say, too, that it always seems to me that the tennis-player should be in thoroughly sound physical condition if he or she hopes to excel at the game. By this I do not mean that it is necessary to lay down rigid rules for special training, but simply that fitness tells on the tennis-court as in most other games. As far as I personally am concerned, I never smoke, and I am also a teetotaller, and these two facts, coupled with the regularity with which I play tennis, serve to keep me thoroughly fit without making it necessary for me to go in for any special system of training.

"Do I advise the use of any particular racquet? No, I do not think so, though, personally, I always use a racquet weighing fourteen and a half ounces. However, any good racquet of fourteen to fourteen and a half ounces in weight should suit a man, and a racquet of thirteen and a half ounces a lady player. After all, the knowledge of how to handle a racquet is the only factor of real importance, for the secret of success at lawn-tennis is to 'hit the ball so that the other fellow can't return it.' Naturally, it is easier to do this with a good racquet than a bad one—but so far, and so far only, does the question of the merit of a racquet enter into the problem."



MR. S. H. SMITH'S STRONG AND ACCURATE FORE-HAND DRIVE.

From a Photo. by "Sport and General."

Mr. S. H. Smith.

"I am not a believer in the one-stroke policy at tennis," says Mr. S. H. Smith, who, with Mr. F. L. Riseley, can boast of the distinction of having been the first player to succeed in defeating the Dohertys; "but, at the same time, if players are anxious to cultivate one stroke in preference to others they cannot, I think, do better than devote their attention to the fore-hand drive, which seems to me the most natural of all strokes. In order to prove really effective the fore-hand drive should have great force, although I would point out that, without length, pace is of very little use.

"The tennis-player of medium ability, however, almost invariably has a very hazy idea of length, and pitches most of his drives in the immediate vicinity of the service line. This, of course, is a mistake. He should endeavour, first of all, to get into the habit of pitching his return well down to the base-line. Having acquired accuracy in this respect, he should then turn his attention to cultivating pace. But I would repeat that pace without length seldom proves of much value as a match-winning factor on the tennis-court.

"Still, so far as beginners are concerned, I do not consider it advisable for them to cultivate any one particular stroke in preference to others. To become a champion it is necessary to practise every stroke conscientiously and thoroughly, as I feel sure that brilliant tennis-player, Mr. H. L. Doherty, and also Mr. F. L. Riseley, must have done. In my opinion Doherty was the best single player ever seen on the tennis-court, while a similar remark applies to Riseley in doubles. I have always thought that if Doherty and Riseley had practised together

for a month in doubles they would have been able to give fifteen to the next greatest players."

Mr. A. W. Gore

One of the first favourites of the lawn is Mr. A. W. Gore, who won the Lawn-Tennis Championship of England for the first time in 1901, repeating his success in 1908 and 1909. Mr. Gore's grit and keenness and his unusually hard hitting have gained for him a high place in the affections of lawn-tennis enthusiasts. His game, too, has improved considerably with the years, and to-day he is assuredly a far better player, and a more interesting player to watch, than when he won the championship ten years ago. He has strengthened, added to, and embellished his game very much during that time, though a very powerful fore-hand drive and a swinging volley will always remain the most prominent features of his play.

"Some people tell me that I only possess one really good stroke—the fore-hand drive," says Mr. Gore, modestly; "and as there is no doubt that the old maxim that 'lookers-on see most of the game' applies very forcibly to lawn-tennis, I will not make bold enough to dispute this rather unflattering criticism. In any case, I think that a powerful fore-hand drive is a lawn-tennis stroke which no player can afford to overlook, for its value as a match-winner surely figures very high in the list of tennis shots which really 'pay,' and 'pay well.'

"I am a believer, too, in the cultivation of an accurate volley shot, for the opportunity to bring this into play so frequently crops up on the lawn-tennis court, and thus, if a player is weak in this respect, many a promising chance of scoring points is completely thrown away. However, enthusiasts of both sexes who are really anxious to train themselves by their own energies into something approaching the 'first class' should endeavour at all times to play with opponents possessed of greater skill than their own, for it is not too

MR. A. W. GORE FINISHING A FORE-HAND DRIVE.
From a Photograph.

MR. A. W. GORE ABOUT TO MAKE A STRONG RETURN.
From a Photo. by "Sport and General."

much to say that one can learn more in five minutes from a better player than oneself than one is likely to pick up in five weeks by practising with opponents of lesser —or even equal—skill."

Miss Dora Boothby.

No lady-player enjoys a greater share of public popularity than Miss Dora Boothby, who won the Ladies' Singles Championship two years ago. Tennis enthusiasts of both sexes entertain the greatest admiration for her wonderful grit and pluck. Indeed, it is not too much to say that no lady plays an uphill game with more good cheer, buoyance, and hopefulness than Miss Boothby, who will never say "die." And the harder the task with which she is faced the better is she pleased.

MISS BOOTHBY, WHO IS A GREAT BELIEVER IN AN ACCURATE SERVICE. THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS HER STRONG OVERHEAD SERVICE, WHICH IS INVARIABLY VERY ACCURATE.

"I suppose by the wildest stretch of the imagination temperament cannot be classed as a shot on the tennis-court," she says, "and yet I cannot help thinking that temperament has more to do with the winning or losing of a game of lawn-tennis than any individual stroke. In fact, I think that the possession of a temperament which refuses to be ruffled even in the face of the direst adversity is an asset of incalculable value on the tennis-court. I will, therefore — even at the risk of being ruled 'out of order' —class temperament as 'a stroke' which pays better than any other at lawn-tennis.

MISS BOOTHBY'S POWERFUL OVERHEAD SERVICE.
From a Photo. by "Sport and General."

"I am a believer in players paying particular attention to an accurate service — the overhead is, I think, the best, and of course a really sound fore-hand drive is a most serviceable shot for every player to cultivate. At the same time, although I am always told that the fore-hand drive is the best shot I have in my repertoire, I never fail to regret that volleying does not run a dead heat with this stroke. To volley accurately is *so* useful.

"Again, the half-volley is a most efficacious stroke in both attack and defence, although it is more largely used for the latter purpose. To half-volley really effectively the player should hit the ball immediately after it has bounced, within a few inches after striking the ground, in fact. It always seems to me that the secret of really accurate half-volleying lies in the possession of a perfect eye, and thus probably the reason why so many players fail in their half-volleying is due to the fact that they do not watch the ball with sufficient care.

"Still another very useful shot is the 'short drop shot,' which needs the most patient practice. This shot is particularly paying from almost any position in the court, although I think it can be used most effectively from the back. Advanced players should make a point of cultivating the 'short drop shot,' as it may often prove of immense value at a critical moment."

His Basket of Memories.

By ROY NORTON.

Illustrated by Gilbert Holiday.

I.

THERE are those who still remember him. Parfait Potin of the marvellous voice, and it is to them that an explanation is due, now that time has seared the wonder and wound of his meteor-like appearance and disappearance; for in the "basket of memories" of each of them dwell fragrant recollections like the scent of yesterday's flowers come and gone, but not forgotten. I believe I am the only one ever favoured with his full confidence—the confidence of a child-like heart that found speech but halting, and stood dumb in a crisis.

He was a child of the caravans, being a French gipsy without pride of lineage, and one of a numerous family that trudged behind a house on wheels from village to village over the undulating roads of France. His father was a wholesome person who invariably rode, though his entire brood might be compelled to get behind and boost the wagon up steep hills where the one horse found his strength inadequate. Therefore his father viewed his defection without placidity on that day when, at the ripe age of seventeen, Parfait fell in love with Jeanne, aged fifteen, of a caravan from the North, and promptly married her.

With Jeanne he began life at the bottom, thrifty and willing, and in time came to the ownership of four dogs and a very tiny caravan, from which it was merely a step to the ownership of a horse and a larger outfit, of which they were jointly proud. The horse, being their first highly-valued possession, was regarded as the greatest horse that ever lived, and was therefore called Buonaparte. He was the first addition to the family, but eight other members were in time added by natural laws, and, Buonaparte included, they enjoyed a mutual happiness.

The red house on wheels, with its tiny window, rack of flower-pots, and rapid canary in front, two side windows with neat curtains drawn back, and clutter of outfit on the roof, became a familiar visitor to the villages of Touraine, to which Parfait Potin and his family regularly wandered and found a profitable field.

It was the custom of Parfait, big and strong, to permit Jeanne, through the little window in front of the caravan, to drive Buonaparte, while he frolicked along the wayside with the little Potins; and one wonders whether or not the hardness of his own youth had not taught him the hearts of his children and made him understand that they would for ever remember him as he was in their tender, formative years—a big boy that played with them and told them stories, and sang to lighten the tedium of the day's travel.

Wherever they might stop in sunny Touraine it was always the same. Parfait's anvil stood beneath the shade of some tree, or, if it rained too hard, was shielded by a lean-to of tarpaulin cunningly stretched on ropes and an iron frame. He was the only one who did not make baskets or trinkets, being dignified by the profession of a tinker.

It was thus I first saw him beneath the spreading trees in the plaza of Pont Levoy, in Loir-et-Cher. I heard the ring of hammer on steel, and, looking from my window, discovered his arrival. The little forge was aglow, and appeared ridiculously small beside the powerfully-muscled man who fanned it to a blaze. Village children clustered round him, and, from time to time, some old acquaintance hurried up to bid him welcome.

It was when the villagers, after laying their jobs at his feet, had departed that I first heard him sing. He had caught up for repair a section of an old gate and, with firm tongs, thrown it across his anvil—there beneath the trees. He struck a blow, and then, as if bubbling with joy of his task, threw back his splendid head over his corded neck and burst lustily into the Prologue from "I Pagliacci." I caught the prophetic words "A basket of memories," and started from my

seat and leaned far across the window-ledge, that I might lose no vibrance of that glorious voice. Heavens! how he sang! I heard the song through, timed to the beating of the reddened metal, and, unable longer to remain aloof, passed out of my temporary home and across to his side.

"Ah, monsieur, you sing!" I said, betraying, as have others more worthy, my enthusiasm.

"I—I sing? Pouf! Yes!" he replied, smiling. "I sing better than anyone I have ever heard. I am a great singer!" And then, leaning back and letting out a roar at his own joke: "But none save those who love me know."

It began our acquaintance and it lasts till now, though broken by that interval in which he passed from our sight.

It took time to assure Parfait Potin that one was worthy of the inner circle of friendship. In this I was assisted by the accident of a copy of *Le Matin*, which he was thumbing over when I ventured across the plaza on the following morning. His grimy finger—the deft but stubby finger of the tinker—was laboriously following line after line as he spelled through a paragraph while leaning on his neglected anvil.

"Ah, good morning, sir," he said, looking up, relieved, when he saw me. "You can read better than I. Tell me, do I comprehend aright?"

He came over to me, and pointed at a printed despatch which told of an American rivalry for a celebrated baritone. "Is it possible that they fight in your country to see which shall pay the most for this M. Payotte?"

"Yes, it is true." I answered, justifying his reading.

"Ah, me," he sighed, "how they would fight if they could hear Parfait Potin sing!"

There was something so self-complacent in his attitude that I found it difficult to suppress my smile. His naïve belief that he was greater than a grand-opera star of the first magnitude was too sincere to admit of ridicule or sarcasm.

"Listen!" he said, catching the twinkle in my eyes. "If I were to sing for them they would believe. They would know what song is—what it means to us who have lived in the caravans, have sung to the birds when the metal glowed white on the anvil! If I should sing? Bah!"

He threw back his head and roared at his own conceit.

"You should hear me sing when all is well. I lift my voice like this, and——"

"Parfait! Parfait!"

His wife called to him sharply from the corner of the wagon, where, unobserved, she had been weaving a basket.

"Perhaps the monsieur would think better of you as a tinker if you stopped bragging and mended the bath-tub brought this morning from the house of M. l'Abbé."

He sobered instantly, and seized from a pile the unwieldy thing of zinc and held it aloft, peering for the holes. He winked gravely at me as he caught up a soldering-iron, and I left him to his work; but his voice was irrepressible, for long after I had gone back to my quiet room it floated up at intervals, with its great organ-tones, now roaring or

"PARFAIT POTIN."

plaintive, as the sentiment of the song might dictate.

For two seasons in different villages of that fair Touraine over which I, a wanderer, wandered, I met the incomparable Parfait at more or less frequent intervals—met him so often that in time I too was admitted to his sacred clique of intimates, and knew the clutch of the brawny, smudged hand, without mental reservation. Once it was far south in the château country, and I was amazed, much as an astronomical observer would be amazed if he discovered a planet out of orbit. Parfait was frankly pleased by my astonishment.

"It is the *petite* Jeanne, my *mignonne*," he said—she was always little and a flower to him, though she weighed fourteen stone. "We, the big and little Potins, are giving her a holiday—a long one, monsieur. We go to Bordeaux! Yes, monsieur, to Bordeaux! Forward, my child!" he shouted to Buonaparte, who had been patiently watching us, and the house on wheels started forward.

The little Jeanne, who weighed nearly two hundred pounds, waved a fat hand at me in pleasant adieux from the interior, and the brood of Potins and a pet dog or two dutifully accompanied the big tinker, who started gaily onward.

It was in a shady grove outside Bordeaux that Fate came to the Potins. Industrious, as was his wont, Parfait had mounted his little anvil, and, as was his custom, beguiled his work with song from sheer joy of his voice and task. A short man with long hair and rather careless attire encroached on the preserves and made himself friendly with the tinker by declaring, with a German accent: "*Ach! Gott in Himmel!* But you can sing!"

Parfait paused long enough to spare a fierce frown of inquiry at the interloper, and then, deciding that the compliment was sincere, smilingly agreed.

"Sing? Ah, monsieur, of course I can sing! Better, possibly, than anyone in the world. They will tell you so—my friends—up there in Touraine. But why not? I am also a great tinker. What have you to mend?"

The conceit of his speech must have been relieved by his roar of spontaneous laughter; but the little man did not smile, only studied him curiously.

"That," he said, "was the magnificent Prologue from 'Pagliacci.'"

"So? Never knew the name of it before. Names do not bother Parfait Potin, monsieur!"

"But where did you learn it?"

"From a young man who once passed a summer in Blois and used to practise it near by my forge. But what of that, monsieur? Have I no right to sing it? Do not the birds up here in the trees teach one another the songs they love? Why should I not sing any song if I like it? Does monsieur object?"

The small man hesitated, wrung his hands timidly, and then took the best possible action—walked over and patted the brawny shoulder.

"You do not understand," he said. "Take no offence, for I, as much as anyone living, love a song and the singer. Won't you, for the love of song, sing it over again? It or such other as pleases you?"

And Parfait, with sudden warmth, melted and laughed, and sang as he took up his work. Sang almost vaingloriously, happy to find a new and appreciative auditor, while the little man walked to and fro with his hands behind his back, always eager to hear more of the tinker's voice and the ring of the hammer in melodious accompaniment.

"Listen!" he interrupted at last. "Does it pay to be a tinker? How much dost thou make, brother?"

The use of the familiar "thou" and "brother" won the heart of Parfait Potin, and the question was not regarded as an impertinence.

"I am a great tinker," he replied, proud of his deftness of craft. "I make much money. Sometimes as high as ten francs a day. But there are days when I work hard for—say—four francs."

"Suppose," ventured the little man, quite eagerly—"suppose I pay Parfait Potin fifty francs a day to sing for me—to sing where and when I want him to—to let me tell him what to sing. Would he sing for me?"

Parfait looked at him fearfully, believing that his new acquaintance was a trifle mad.

"Ah, monsieur," he said, softening his big, mellow voice to a fatherly, sympathetic solicitude, "it has been such a warm day! I fear you are tired. Perhaps you need rest. The sun has been so hot! Shall I help you to your home? Come, let us go to your house, and you must come and see me again. Some time when it is not so warm."

It was the stranger's turn to laugh, which he did quite merrily.

"You believe me crazy, is it not? Ah, you do not understand. I say I am not

foolish in the head. I will pay. Will you come with me? I to pay the expenses—all, everything, and fifty francs a day?"

Parfait began to believe him in earnest, and yet wavered. From the inside of the red house came Jeanne, the decisive head of the family.

"Certainly, if monsieur pays in advance, and if it is not for too long a time." This

"ACH! GOTT IN HIMMEL! BUT YOU CAN SING!"

latter as a cautious afterthought. And then, in rapid French argot, she expostulated with Parfait.

"What if he is sunstruck? God knows the Germans are all queer. Did they not, at Alsace—but that is no matter! If he is fool enough to pay you such an immense sum of money, go you with him and I will run the caravan until he tires of your bellow and you return to me. It is a wonderful fortune—too good, I fear, to be true. Fifty francs a day? Pouf! Until he shows his money I shall believe it impossible."

The strange lover of song, as if comprehending that the fate of his bargain rested on the delivery of money, was fumbling nervously with a fat pocket-book, and now thrust into the hands of Jeanne a bank-note. Mark you the perception of the man! He gave it to the woman!

"It is agreed!" he declared. "It is agreed! You are to go with me and sing

where I wish, and to get fifty francs each day and expenses, whether you sing or not."

The shabby German said no more, but hurried away, turning only to say, "To-night I shall come again."

Jeanne and Parfait, after watching him out of sight, looked at each other, and then, as if remembering something, she opened her pudgy and not over-clean fist and unfolded the crumpled note. Both started with surprise and gasped, and held it up, and fingered it, as if doubting their senses. It was for five hundred francs!

"It can't be good!" she declared, being the first to recover speech.

It required an Eve to bite the first apple, and a Jeanne to put their first five-hundred-franc bank-note to the test. Parfait would never have had the temerity. She went direct to the nearest bank, trembling, as Eve probably trembled when she took her desperate plunge, and nervously thrust the note through the wicket and asked for change. She was surprised at the immaculate nonchalance of the man behind, who merely glanced at it and in return gave her shining twenty-franc gold pieces—coins which she could appreciate. She clutched them in her stubby fingers and tied them in the corner of her handkerchief and hurried away from the house of Mammon.

II.

It was the beginning of great and sometimes terrifying adventures for Parfait when Herr Gottfried took him from Bordeaux for his first ride in the railway train. Paris was not all that the tinker had believed it. It was stuffy, and there were times when he had a childish inclination to run away and sleep beneath the trees in the Champs Elysées. The new clothes to which he slowly became accustomed were stiff when compared with the freedom of a half-bared torso, the tinker's voluminous corduroy trousers, and the free-swinging leather apron.

The Herr Professor Gottfried was a constant mystery to the tinker, who found him a task-master. Now he sang hour after hour, under an instructor who revelled in his voice but made him sing, "Ah-eh-i-ooh, ah-ee-i-ooh!" till his ears and throat rebelled at the nonsensical reiteration. But there were more pleasant periods in which he learned to pour his heart into the other songs of the man of the loved Prologue, and mastered other measures from the "Cavalleria Rusticana," which he was told he must also sing.

On that day when they climbed the gang-plank of a huge steamship and Parfait obediently, but with whipped mien, followed the sputtering Gottfried, he almost rebelled; but the Herr Gottfried had shown him a cheque for such a munificent sum to be sent to Jeanne at Blois that he shut his teeth doggedly and recalled her last letter, in which she told him that, so long as the German paid, there must be no faltering. He, the tinker, must do as bid and sing like a nightingale in a poplar grove at midnight, or crow like chanticleer at dawn, did the man who paid command! Sing and see that the money was sent, for already they were richer than Edouard Poirier, who owned the finest caravan that ever trundled over France.

The bewildering voyage had no sooner become a fact than the more bewildering maze of stone and steel, pile on pile, caught him cowering by the steamer's rail as she moved up the channel past the famous statue of which he had been told.

They kept him too busy for remembrance to hold him for long periods. They took him to a wonderful building, and there he found others who spoke his tongue and smiled when he assured them that he was the greatest singer that had ever lived. They did not believe it until it came to the rehearsals, and that resonant voice went out with unmeasurable power, and then—grudgingly agreed. He enjoyed those rehearsals in the somnolent opera-house; they were so much like playing games with the children when the day's work was done. The dress amused him, for the garb was finer than he had ever hoped to wear. He wished that Jeanne, the children, and Buonaparte could see him in all that bravery which appealed to his exaggerated sense of the gorgeous.

He could never forget the day he halted in front of the opera-house and saw his name in big red letters. He could not read the English announcement loudly declaring him to be the greatest baritone the world had ever known, and heralding his first appearance. He tried to get a bootblack to explain, but the boy said, "G'wan! Yer nutty!" or something that sounded equally incomprehensible, and he was afraid to display his ignorance to any of his fellow-members of the cast, who appeared so superior that Parfait was for ever fighting an inclination to bob his head and salute.

The eventful night came, and the impresario, to fortify him, sat in his dressing-room and watched them make him up. The roar of humanity was outside, screened off by the curtain; but faintly, deliriously tender

came the notes of the marvellous orchestra in the overture. He had not appreciated all the terrors of his ordeal until they thrust him through the opening in the curtain and the flood of light from the front was on him. It was overwhelming. He stood, mute and terrorizing blur, until at his elbow, behind the curtain, came the voice of the little impresario.

"Parfait! Parfait Potin! Sing as you sang at the forge! Remember the forge! Be the tinker of Tours!"

He shut his eyes and raised his arm. Down

"WHEN PARFAIT FOLLOWED THE SPUTTERING GOTTFRIED, HE ALMOST REBELLED."

trembling, while the prompter in the tiny hood at his feet thought he had forgotten his lines.

"Courage!" he whispered, reassuringly; and then, in rapid French, repeated the first well-remembered but nearly-forgotten lines of the Prologue.

Parfait stood dumb, everything a wild, it came, in time and with methodic regularity. The scene in front was shut out. He was there again in the wayside village of France, beneath the sheltering friendly trees that shielded him from sun and rain. The house on wheels was comfortably near, and the children wove baskets in the shade. The *petite* Jeanne was bidding him do his best to

mend the broken gate. The orchestra accompaniment was lost, and from the "basket of memories" came the "clang, clang, clang!" of the hammer to which he timed himself and sang.

In splendour ineffable and fiercely yearning the great voice boomed out, while the arm, masked and brawny, beat the time.

"Ring up the curtain!" he sang, and stood stock-still until they dragged him back, wondering what all that turmoil of noise was about. For an instant he was panic-stricken. Perhaps the building was on fire! Perhaps some accident had happened out there in front! What else could cause that outburst? In that terrific diapason of sound he could not catch the theme, the pulsating, vital truth that he was being given an ovation and that he had, in reality, become the greatest baritone.

He could not respond to the encore, but stood bewildered and wooden beside Herr Gottfried when, time and again, the little man pulled him, unresisting, to the front and smiled and bowed and bowed and smiled again.

"THE LITTLE MAN PULLED HIM, UNRESISTING, TO THE FRONT."

Thus was his first appearance. In time he became accustomed to the noise and the light. But as his fame grew his self-appreciation decreased, until as he passed along the street he shivered when knowing men and women recognized, and whispered, and pointed at him. Life was no longer a jest. The "basket of memories" was crowding on him to the forgetfulness of all else save his task.

The edge of two months had worn off before he received a letter from the impresario of a rival opera-house which he could not read. He took it to the protecting German with the dishevelled clothes, and begged him to translate, fearful lest he had done something wrong. The Herr Gottfried read it and frowned, frowned malignantly, and used strong language in his own tongue before lapsing into French.

"They say they understand you have no contract with me, and offer you twenty thousand francs a night each night you sing. What do you think of that?"

Parfait was deep in thought, with his head bent forward on both hands and staring at the floor.

"Think of it, monsieur? I think nothing. There is not that much money. It wouldn't last long. Just a few nights and all the money in the world would be mine; but do you suppose Jeanne would advise me to take it until the heat of the sun left M. What's-his-name's head?"

The dominance of Jeanne was still directing him, and he had unwittingly made a most adroit answer. Herr Gottfried stared at him

in astonishment for a moment, thinking to himself that in the seemingly simple brain of the tinker of Tours had come a wisdom of his worth. He plunged headlong to rectify any chance of error.

"There *is* that much money," he declared, "and from now on I will pay it to you."

Parfait couldn't understand, but wanted to assure his friend of his gratitude.

"I wouldn't think of singing for anyone but you, *mon bon ami*," thinking of all the money he had received from this one man and not at all of the new offer, because the sum was too large and ridiculous to master. Herr Gottfried, still alarmed lest the distinguished baritone should escape him, rushed away to get his lawyer to draw up an ironclad contract, leaving Parfait Potin wrapped in the memory of home and a speculation as to where the caravan with Jeanne, the children, and Buonaparte were at that exact moment.

After all, Herr Gottfried was liberal and a man of his word. Religiously—nay, grudgingly would perhaps be best—he mailed, each time Parfait sang, that tiny fortune to Jeanne at the addresses which she gave. And little did Parfait reck the sum. To him there was a jumble of figures which were of no consequence, his basic calculation being made on the fifty francs a day. When it came his turn he sang—sang gloriously! But all the critics commented on the fact that the "greatest baritone" had one unfailing mannerism. Invariably, in strongest flights of song, he beat time with his arm and closed hand. They never knew that always, when he forgot himself, the eyes were blind to all in front and saw but the old scenes, and that in imagination Parfait Potin was striking the fiery metal or bearing down the handle of the forge.

In the dingy *café* in the French quarter that he frequented at night his auditors, kindred spirits all, heard Parfait Potin at his best. It was there that he could close his eyes and sing the songs of the caravan until the rafters resounded with tense sound and the echoes of memory and soul reverberated in the hearts of those other exiles, who paid not, yet understood.

And so, modest and shrinking in private life, he passed the days of that glittering nightmare.

It was almost at the close of the season when it reached the end. His old and famous favourite, the dual bill of "I Pagliacci" and "Cavalleria Rusticana," for which prince and pauper scrambled for seats, was to be given, and the call-boy came running to his superior, who hurried to another superior, and thence the word was passed on up the line to Herr Gottfried himself that Parfait Potin, the tinker of Tours, was missing. From the highest to the lowest they fumed and fretted, and at last, as the only recourse, sent on his understudy.

It was the next day when Herr Gottfried received the note that, I am convinced, so nearly broke his comprehending heart. It read:—

"Most Respected Monsieur,—To-day I walked over to the province of Brooklyn across the big bridge, and some men were mending a strand. They were good tinkers, but not so quick as Parfait Potin. Truly, monsieur, I am a very good tinker, perhaps the best that ever lived. I watched, and it set me to thinking, for I had a great hunger of thought, and it seemed to me we Potins are like the bridge, all the strands must be together and hold together; or if one breaks the whole bridge goes very bad. At the boulevard Eastern and the Avenue Nostrand, when the hunger was worst, sweet smoke filled the air, and voices of laughing children and barking of dogs and the whinny of horses, and then something more. A tinker such as I, hammering his iron! I wanted to talk to them, but I looked too fine in the clothes you bought me, and they spoke not, and I was a very lonesome man. Everything around the forge made me think of my Touraine. You may laugh at me, monsieur, but lately when I sleep at night I see its friendly trees, and they whisper things and beckon, and the nightingale is sad for the tinker who used to whistle back an answer to his song. I cannot sing any more, monsieur, that song in 'Pagliacci' about the basket of memories. It hurts too much, for my basket of memories is too full. So I am going back to my own, to the caravan, the fields, the forests, and the forge, to which I, the tinker, was born. A steamer sails to-day for France, on which goes the one who bids you adieu!

"Parfait Potin."

That was all! He was gone! The world of lights and shine had lost him as if he had never been. The voice that had swung and swayed and torn the emotions of thousands was lost for ever, for his step was irrevocable.

One evening, not long since, I came down the long strip of road from Bourré, where they grow the mushrooms, and, weary and longing, held my wheel straight to the heart of Pont Levoy. There is a fine old plaza there, sheltered by stately trees, and dim shadows and ancient walls and the mysterious

"PARFAIT, RICHER THAN ALL HIS TRIBE, HAD COME TO HIS OWN AGAIN."

softness of things which do not change. A caravan had bivouacked in a shady nook, the most wonderful vehicle I had ever seen outside a circus parade. It was bedight with gilt and fitted regardless of expense. A decrepit but contented horse hovered around, gathering the last mouthfuls of his day's repast, while a huge Norman, worthy of a horse-show's adulation, slept, fat and full, beside a tree. And suddenly, as I paused, there came the spread of a splendid voice in song, and then I knew! Parfait Potin, richer than all his tribe, lost to the vast, swarming cities of glitter and wealth, had come to his own again. The basket of memories had called him home from across the conquered seas, and in that calling and its response he had found content.

GERMAN HUMOUR.

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THE humour of nations differs just as does the humour of periods, and it is not always either easy or fair to judge its products from a foreign standpoint or from one far removed in point of time. The jokes which kept the ancient Greeks and Romans laughing for centuries seem childish and worse to us—tragically dismal more often than not. And we may come much nearer to our own times—so near, in fact, as fifty years ago—and fail to detect the full flavour of the fun of our own grandfathers. Some of the famed humorous books of the middle nineteenth century awake no more than hollow smiles—interspersed with yawns—on any rare modern occasion when a reader feels tempted to dive into their pages once more. And yet neither the ancient Greeks nor our own grandfathers were imbeciles, as many other works of their brains remain to testify; wherefore we must conclude that there is something elusive, something evanescent, in the nature of humour, which is lost by effluxion of time—and by travel. There is often the same trouble with cigars.

In the matter of nationality it is not always a mere question of difficulty in translation; a perfectly translatable joke may fail to "carry" with foreigners, so that it is all a possibility that Carlyle's German baron, jumping on tables by way of learning to be lively, was less a clown than he seems, and that Voltaire may have been mistaken when he wished the Germans more wit and fewer consonants.

But all this is a matter of written and spoken humour merely. In pictures we have a universal language, and in so far as the humour is purely pictorial, no frontier bounds or obscures it. Still, a joke which is all in the picture is a rarity, and many a quite humorously-drawn picture depends largely on the legend accompanying it. In our brief peep into some recent volumes of the national German comic paper, *Fliegende Blätter*, we shall have the opportunity of judging of half-a-dozen pictorial jokes, of which some are independent of text and others are not.

It may be well to remind our readers that *Fliegende Blätter* occupies much the same position in Germany as does *Punch* in Great Britain. *Punch* is now just seventy years of age, and *Fliegende Blätter* is only three years younger. In its early days the German publication dealt with politics at least as freely as *Punch* does now, but for many years back this element has been rigidly banned. In one respect *Fliegende Blätter* must be very nearly unique, if not quite so, among weekly publications of to-day; for it continues still to publish wood-cut illustrations, and very admirably-executed wood-cuts they are. This, in a day when wood-engraving is near to being a lost art, is in itself a remarkable claim to distinction and notice. No doubt the survival is due to a sense of pride on the part of the proprietors, who are the sons of the original founders of the paper, Braun and Schneider, who were artists and wood-engravers, and who started *Fliegende Blätter* sixty-seven years ago with the idea of making it the vehicle for the very best specimens they could produce of the then universal and flourishing art. Everybody who remembers the extraordinarily rapid downfall of wood-engraving on the introduction of photographic process-work, and who regrets the disappearance of a very characteristic and distinguished art, will

honour Messrs. Braun and Schneider, juniors, for so faithfully keeping the flag flying in these late days, at an expense which there is every temptation to evade.

Much more might be written of *Fliegende Blätter* and its history (*Flying Leaves*, by the way, is the title in English) and of the famous artists who have contributed to its pages in the past; but space is short, and it is time to turn to our selection of pictures from last year's volumes. First comes a drawing that needs no legend—a drawing taken from the

"A MODERN OPERA."

second January number. "A Modern Opera" is the title, and the picture is full of quaint character and incident. Plainly the satire is directed against those later composers who out-Wagner Wagner, and here the enormous orchestra, the uproarious din, and the alarming effect on the audience are brought to the comic extreme. The orchestra almost crowds the audience off the floor, with the exception of a hapless double row, who, imprisoned between orchestra and stage, fall hopeless and helpless victims to the full fury of the storm. Here we observe one victim carried out in a state of collapse by duly-appointed Red Cross attendants, while others remain to writhe in agony and to fall in their turn. They clap their hands to their ears, they roll and gasp, except one enthusiast of unnatural determination, who folds his arms, knits his brows, sets his teeth, and braves the din to the last. At the end of the rows, too, stands a stout uniformed seller of programmes and letter of opera-glasses, complacently calm and unmoved. It is easy to see, however, that long experience has made him stone-deaf. In the fore part of the orchestra is a row of drums of every sort, beaten with the wildest fury. Fiddlers by the dozen compete with pairs and triplets of enormous brazen instruments, and a double set of cymbals clashes in unison. In the centre at the front—after the Continental fashion—we see the prompter, fortunately shielded from the direct blast of sound by his box, and sending his hints to the stage performers through a speaking-trumpet. We look on the picture, in fact, from the stage, and so are able to judge of the full effect of the music. People clasp their heads in hopeless agony, or hang over the fronts of boxes exhausted. A hapless wife flings her arms round her maddened husband, and restrains him with difficulty from a three-storey leap into the midst of the orchestra; a devoted husband opposite attempts to revive his unconscious wife with a smelling-

AN "IDYLL."

things through an ear-trumpet! The whole design is full of spirit and invention, and it is unfortunate that the necessary reduction of the reproduction makes it somewhat less distinct.

A. Roeseler is a most powerful draughtsman whose work has been familiar in *Fliegende Blätter* for long past. We have here an "Idyll," apropos of last year's comet. In a dressing-gown and a night-cap an amateur astronomer has mounted his roof and makes the most of the genial warmth of his chimney by sitting on it to view the comet through a toy telescope. Through a trap-door comes a small boy whose task it is to keep up a constant supply of beer for the sustenance of the philosopher. Three empty pots already embellish the tiles by the foot of the chimney-pot which is the throne of science for the time being, one not yet wholly empty is gripped bottle; everywhere people stuff fingers and fists into their ears, and the very stone caryatides supporting the architrave at the end wriggle in their torture and clap hands to ears. In a box to our left a young officer under cover of the uproar passes a note to a young lady in the box adjoining; and in the row above the sole smiling face in the whole house is seen to be that of a deaf old lady who is trying to catch the drift of

SARCASTIC.

Amateur Motorist: "Excuse me, but can you direct me to Gros Birkersdorf?"
Standenlipp: "To Gros Birkersdorf? Certainly, sir—straight on through the other wall, if you don't mind the expense."

CONQUEST!

"Hullo, Miller! What are you doing in the ditch?"
"Oh—the conquest of the air, you know—just the conquest of the air!"

in the pundit's hand, and reinforcements, in the shape of another, quite full, ascend through the trap-way; while on another roof-ridge two vagrant cats watch the pursuit of knowledge with doubtful stare. This, like the first of our illustrations, carries its meaning and fanciful oddity on its face, with no aid from letterpress.

The next picture is also from the hand of Roeseler, but, striking as it is, it derives some aid from the text that goes with it. Let us imagine, if we can, the previous adventures of the very amateur motorist who finds his sudden passage through a cottage wall so little of a novelty that he calmly asks his way of the inmates!

AN OPPORTUNIST.

Actor: "Wonderful chap, Bonvivant! Never knew such a borrower! I thought I'd dodged him to-day, but he waited till we were both lying 'dead' in the last act, and then tapped me for half a crown!"

Stories of actors and stories of borrowers, and even stories of actors who were borrowers, are no novelties either in Germany or in this country. But a story of an actor-borrower with a better sense of opportunity than Bonvivant, hero of the adventure here pictured, would be hard to find or to invent.

There is nothing like seizing the opportunity as soon as it presents itself. One is distantly reminded of the pallid, long-haired youth who found himself (and his opportunity) in a crowded tube-lift which stuck half-way.

"Are we really stuck tight?" he asked the attendant, anxiously.

"Yes, sir—till the workmen put things right."

"Can anybody get out now?"

"Certainly not, sir."

"Thanks! Ladies and gentlemen, I will now recite 'Christmas Day in the Workhouse'!"

There has been so much tragedy among the intrepid few who have given themselves to aviation of late years that a little comedy, or even farce, is doubly welcome—is imperatively needed, in fact, to keep the balance fair. *Fliegende Blätter* is ready with it, and there is a pleasant irony in the innocent reply of the gentleman in the ditch who explains that he is merely engaged in the conquest of the air. However, one should remember that it is but a very few years ago that all the comic papers had the motorist equally at their mercy, and the motor breakdown bade fair for a season to rival the mother-in-law as a joke for permanent stock. Probably by the time that *Fliegende Blätter* triumphantly completes its hundredth year such drawings as this will be collected as curiosities by a generation of flyers who fall even less rarely than a motorist falls now.

W. Stockmann is an artist whose work has delighted readers of *Fliegende Blätter* for many years. Here he gives us a group of midnight roysterers who have brought an outraged householder out of bed in a state of furious agitation to listen to a polite request for permission to smell the lilac growing over his wall. Some of us will remember an English parallel; the story which tells of a pawnbroker who protests angrily when similarly brought to his window by a request to know the time. "But you've got my watch, old feller!" explains the hilarious visitor.

TRUE POLITENESS.

"What on earth is the matter down there?"
"Ah, good morning! We've just knocked you up to ask if you will kindly allow us to smell your delightful lilac!"

Still another such anecdote comes to the recollection, one which is now so old as to have again become new. Again the scene is a quiet street in the dead of night, and again a cheerful home-goer rings and knocks furiously at a door till a sleepy and alarmed head emerges from an upper window with a request for explanations.

"Ah, good evening—morning, I mean—my dear sir. I think you advertised in this morning's—yesterday morning's—*Times* for a companion to share your Continental tour?"

"Yes; but what——"

"All right, all right! I just looked round to say I couldn't come, that's all!"

By a Method Strange and New.

By MRS. BAILLIE REYNOLDS.

Illustrated by W. H. Margetson.

IT was with something approaching haste—more, with an inward excitement for which she was at a loss to account—that Rosalind returned to her new lodgings upon the afternoon of the most fatiguing day that she ever remembered to have spent.

The November twilight was over all. The small street without lay dun and colourless in the dusk. Her sitting-room was on the first floor of the ancient, timbered house which leaned forward from the row of neat, modern stone dwellings in the humbler quarter of the old Devon port.

It was, however, the furniture of the sitting-room which had made the young secretary feel that, at any price, she must lodge in No. 7, Harbour Row.

The landlady was uncommunicative, and had not agreeable manners. The new lodger had not ventured upon many inquiries. She had gazed in mute wonder upon the gate-legged table, the genuine oak bureau, the carven chest, the quaint chairs, and the shelves which went like a dado round the room, some of which were filled with books, of a kind and in quantities almost enough to warrant its being called a library.

When first she saw the rooms she had stood amazed, as one who, opening an ordinary oyster, should find a pearl within. Editions of Borrow, Meredith, Fitzgerald, Jane Austen, and Arthur Machen smiled at her from their niches; poets, philosophers, classics jostled the ultra-moderns in that remarkably unexpected collection.

"If I take these rooms, might I use the books?" she had asked, the hunger of the book-lover throbbing in her heart.

To which the landlady, Mrs. Moon, had made this rejoinder: "I'm sure *I* sha'n't hinder yer."

Upon the mantelpiece some vandal hand, probably that of Mrs. Moon, had arranged a stuffed kingfisher, two shell boxes, and two photographs of young women.

Rosalind's first act on taking possession had been to move these atrocities out of sight. She substituted one or two of her own possessions.

At ten o'clock that morning she had duly betaken herself up the narrow, tortuous alleys of the old town of Penmawther to the romantic house and grounds of the celebrated novelist, Mrs. Cantrell Curnock, who had engaged her as secretary.

Rosalind was practically alone in the world, except for one or two distant relatives, who hardly counted. She had enough money to keep her from want, but felt the need of work to fill her detached existence.

She did not expect an easy post, for she had heard of her new employer's neurotic temperament. Her first day was dispiriting. Nothing that she did seemed to please. She persevered, however, fulfilling as best she could the demands of a querulous egotist; and as she was leaving was astonished by the words with which she was dismissed.

"Well," said the spoiled celebrity, "at least you are well-bred, and you have your head screwed on all right. I think you may be able to settle into my ways before long."

This was encouraging; and Rosalind found her journey back the shorter for the stimulus the words afforded. She almost ran home to her books and her fascinating abode.

The fire burned clear, the kettle sang on the hob. How inviting was that queer chair with its high back and sides—its two corners framed to support the head of the reader! Mrs. Moon had put her little loaf, her butter, and her cream upon the table. She had but to make tea, draw in her chair, select a book out of all that wealth spread before her—and what an evening of rest and ease after the fret and strain of her difficult day's work!

She sipped her tea in a content that tended to drowsiness. As she so sat, thinking of nothing, in indolent well-being, she heard a latch-key thrust into the lock of the street-door below. In the silence she clearly distinguished each sound made by the person who entered—the stamp of feet upon the mat, the smart closing of the door, and steps upon the firm oak stair, which was one of the

surprises of the house, being unusually wide. The new-comer gained the stair-head and walked smartly along the passage towards her room. A hand was laid upon the latch, on which she started broad awake. The handle was heard to turn and the door to open. She sat staring towards it in a stupefaction which was not unmixed with horror ; for *though she heard it open, the door remained manifestly closed.*

She could not escape from the conclusion that someone had entered. There was a pause, exactly as though the new-comer, on catching sight of her, had stood still. Then the steps actually crossed the room to the fireplace.

Rosalind leaned forward, her ears preternaturally on the alert. She held her breath and felt sure that she could hear the audible respiration of a person who has just run upstairs. Her fine eighteenth-century clock, in mahogany case with brass inlay, was ticking upon the mantelshelf. Against the wall behind it was propped a photograph of Watts's "Love and Death." Miniatures of her grandparents stood on either side. They were by the hand of a master.

Had she trusted to the witness of her ears, not her eyes, she could have sworn that somebody had come into the room, and was now examining the ornaments over the fireplace. There may have been a draught, which had travelled slowly upstairs from the opening door below ; anyhow, the photo-

"'HOW CURIOUS!' BREATHED THE YOUNG LODGER. 'IT WAS JUST AS IF HE CAME INTO THIS ROOM.'"

graph swayed and fell forwards, much as though a hand had brushed it.

There was a tap at the door. Mrs. Moon stood there, with that curious expression in her eyes that seemed like a lurking watchfulness.

"Shall I clear the tea, miss?" she asked.

Rosalind recovered herself with an effort. Had she been asleep? She looked round; the presence was no longer felt.

"Yes, please clear; I have quite done."

There was a moment's silence while Mrs. Moon collected the things upon a tray.

"By the way," said Rosalind, "I heard somebody come in with a latch-key just now. I should rather like a latch-key myself."

"I'll ask Moon about it, miss."

"Have you another lodger besides me?"

"No, miss. That was Moon come in just now."

There was a pause. The woman was sending furtive glances at the girl as she folded the cloth. Presently she said: "You mustn't let the creaking of the boards annoy you, miss."

"The creaking of the boards?"

"Yes, miss. Moon and me, we occupies the room behind this, and it seems as if there was a kind of a viberration of the floor. When he opens that door and steps over that floor, it do sound uncommon like as if somebody was doing that same in this front room."

She observed the look of relief steal over Rosalind's expressive face.

"How curious!" breathed the young lodger. "It was just as if he came into this room."

"Quite so, miss. I thought I would just tell you how it was."

She completed her ministrations, closed the door, and vanished. The evening passed in a delightful peace. Rosalind, who had literary ambitions of her own, meditated a course of reading, with a view to the acquisition of style. She outlined her authors, of many different types, and determined to begin with a complete course of Stevenson.

When she hurried to her work next morning she had made up her mind that, whatever the hardships of her position should prove to be, she would stick to her work, in order to remain in so inspiring an entourage.

Had she but known it, her employer on her side was equally anxious to keep her. Before she had tried her new secretary for a week she knew that she had found a treasure. Her manner grew kinder, and Rosalind began to feel secure.

One afternoon she had a curious intimation that some person used her room when she was out. Walking in as usual, she found a chair drawn up to the table, a book lying open, and beside it a sheet of paper and a pencil. She went near, with a feeling of surprise. The book was a volume of Browning. It lay open at the poem called "Mesmerism." One or two of the stanzas of the poem had been very faintly pencil-marked down the side, as if to draw attention to them.

> All I believed is true!
> I am able yet
> All I want to get
> By a method as strange as new:
> Dare I trust the same to you?
>
> If, at night, when doors are shut
> And the wood-worm picks
> And the death-watch ticks . . .
> And the socket floats and flares,
> And the house-beams groan,
> And a foot unknown
> Is surmised on the garret stairs,
> And the locks slip, unawares . . .

A subtle terror invaded the girl's very soul. She stood in the dusk of a wild winter gloaming, with the shrieking wind making the timbers of the old house creak about her. Except for Mrs. Moon, coming to remove the tea-things, she should not see a human soul until the next morning. And here upon her table lay what read like an unearthly message.

With an impulse of anger, she crossed to the bell and rang it pretty sharply.

It was some two or three minutes before the landlady appeared in response; minutes filled in by a voice that seemed repeating in her brain—"A method as strange as new! Dare I trust the same to you?"

"Mrs. Moon, who has been using my room?" she demanded, tremulously, as an anxious face looked in.

"There now," said Mrs. Moon, "it was my cousin Fanny, miss. She was over for the day to see me. She don't often come, but when she do it's more than I can do to hold her back from the books. She always was such a one for reading. I'm sure I'm very sorry, miss. I hope she ain't spoilt nothing." Her attitude was meekly apologetic.

At once Rosalind felt ashamed of herself. Was a solitary life already making her nervy? She hastily assured Mrs. Moon that Fanny was welcome to come and look at the books.

"Poetry, as like as not. She's a queer one, Fanny," observed Fanny's cousin, beginning to lay the cloth.

"How came you to have so many books?" asked Rosalind.

"Moon, he bought them at a sale, miss,

dirt cheap. He wanted the shelves, or I should say I wanted 'em. And we had to take the books as well."

Rosalind watched Mrs. Moon narrowly. The shelves had, most undoubtedly, the aspect of having been made to fit the room. But the woman's unruffled face was not the face of a liar. When she was left alone she had hardly the courage to take up the volume of Fanny's preference. Yet she did so, and read the poem through. Then she turned to the fly-leaf. Most of the books in the collection had no owner's name inscribed within. This one was, however, marked with the initials "L. V."

As she held it she heard, as she often did, the sound of the latch-key thrust into the lock below. She listened. There were the sounds of running feet upon the stair. Leaping from her chair she flew to her own door, flung it wide, and stood well out into the oak-panelled passage, to see Moon go into his back room in the way that caused so peculiar a "viberration."

"'NO!' SHE CRIED ALOUD. 'DON'T TRUST IT TO ME! I DON'T WANT TO KNOW IT! I AM AFRAID OF YOU!'"

The steps ascended, but no Moon was visible, except for the pale light of that in the heavens, which was the only light outside her door.

The unseen visitor went some steps along the passage towards her. Then it was just as though he saw her. He paused.

The words rang in her ears—"By a method as strange as new." In her scare she thought she heard again the quickly-drawn, impulsive breath, close, close to her.

"No!" she cried aloud. "Don't trust it to me! I don't want to know it! I am afraid of you!"

Once more a sound in the tingling silence—a sound as if he caught his breath. Then the footsteps quietly and slowly receded. She heard them descend the stairs, cross the hall, heard the door bang. . .

The storm without wailed. Black clouds, hurrying over the moon, blotted out the stair-head and left her in darkness. She fled

back to the lamp-lit warmth of her room, with a heart beating like a hammer; and, sinking down into her chair, was conscious of nothing clearly for a long, long time.

It required a tremendous effort of courage for Rosalind to go to bed that night. For the first time in those rooms she was oppressed with a sense of isolation. The delightful thing about her new home had been that, though alone, she had ever felt companioned there. Now it seemed that the companionship had been withdrawn. Fantastically she felt that she had driven it away. She had said, "I am afraid of you."

If, however, her ghost was so tractable that one decided word from herself had exorcized him, all might be well. Yet it seemed that his rooms had been more comfortable with him than without him. In the middle of the night she woke to the remembrance that Mrs. Moon had told her a deliberate falsehood about the "viberration" and Moon's entrance with the latch-key. In her heart she knew that Moon never by any chance came in by the front door. Then it was clear that the Moons knew the rooms were haunted.

An unaccountable depression of spirits assailed her. All night she was wretched, and she awoke wretched.

Mrs. Cantrell Curnock was that afternoon giving a tea-party, and had invited her new secretary to be present and help her with her duties as hostess. This was an unwonted excitement, as she would meet the county set for the first time. She put on her prettiest frock, and wished she did not look so pale.

The lady novelist was very much the fashion at Penmawther, and everybody was at her reception.

One, charming Mrs. Benson, wife of a neighbouring squire, took a fancy to Rosalind, and cordially invited her to come to dinner. The girl caught at the idea of an evening away from her ghost and his books.

Mrs. Benson wrote her name and address.

"Miss Moore, 7, Harbour Row. Why, that is—surely that is the timbered house, isn't it?"

Rosalind said it was.

"Oh, dear, that's most interesting!" said her new friend, who was quite young and somewhat imprudent.

"Why is it interesting?" asked the girl, eagerly.

"Your predecessor there—poor Leonard Verrall. But I expect you have heard all about him?"

"Never a word! Do tell me! Did all the books belong to him? How exciting! Let me hear all about it."

Mrs. Benson looked grave; she seemed embarrassed.

"Are you comfortable there?" she asked, somewhat irrelevantly.

There was quite a noticeable pause. Rosalind really did not know what to say.

"They are delightful rooms," she brought out at last.

"And Mrs. Moon is a nice woman?"

"Quite. Very clean, very honest, and a good cook."

"Poor soul! She has had such bad luck with her lodgers! Ten sets in nine weeks last summer, somebody said."

Rosalind leaned forward earnestly towards the speaker. "Do you know why they left?"

"Well, I only knew one set—London friends of my own. They thought that Mrs. Moon was mad. It was rather awkward for me, because it was all my doing, their going there. I said the rooms were so exceptionally charming—all just as poor Leonard left them. And they were fascinated when they saw them; but they said there was always somebody in and out—listening at the door, moving their things while they were out, and so on. I thought it must be their fancy; but, you see, other people were not comfortable there. It relieves me to hear that you are."

"Did you know Mr. Verrall?"

"Oh, quite well."

"Why should you not tell me about him? I have been at Harbour Row a fortnight; you needn't be afraid to speak."

"Well, he was a brilliant young fellow, and wrote that novel that everybody talked so much about, 'A Knight of St. John.' He came to live down here because he said he could write better away from the wear and tear of London. But really it was because he was infatuated with Mrs. Cantrell Curnock. It was one of those cases that are so hopeless and so distressing. As I suppose you know, she has a husband somewhere, and she is ten years older than young Verrall. But it was of no use to talk to him—or to her, either. She behaved very badly, we all think. And then, just as it was at its highest, the Mackintyres came to the neighbourhood, and she took a fancy to the Colonel, and poor Leonard's day was over. He was a dear fellow, and my husband liked him extremely. But he could not stand up under the blow. And one day he disappeared."

"Do you mean that he—did away with himself?"

"We fear he did. He sent a letter to Mrs. C. C., telling her that after that day he should cease to be. At first we thought he had gone off, just to see what would happen. But it is not easy to disappear off the face of the earth nowadays, and I believe his people made considerable inquiry. He had taken a boat, as he often did, and rowed off alone out of the harbour. The boat was found drifting, with all the clothes he had worn in it. We thought it possible that he had bathed and been taken with cramp, but his body was never found. My husband declared that he had just rowed out to some ship and got taken aboard her, and sailed off to make a fortune abroad. But since—since these stories got about in Penmawther about Harbour Row, everyone has thought him dead."

Rosalind did not reply. She felt unable to say anything, because her sensations were so peculiar. Her main idea was a passionate sympathy for Leonard Verrall, and anger at her own cowardice and unkindness in sending him away. After a while she said:—

"You may tell everybody that there is no truth in this tale of the haunting of Harbour Row. I am very comfortable there."

"DO YOU MEAN THAT HE—DID AWAY WITH HIMSELF?"

"Perhaps you are not imaginative," said Mrs. Benson, hopefully.

"Perhaps not," said Rosalind.

She went home in a whirlwind of emotion. Had she scared away the sensitive, craving presence, which was longing to express itself to someone? Was it vanished, past recall?

If it had not been for her vulgar, instinctive fear of the occult, would she have had some message, some confidence from the hot, impulsive young soul which had thrown aside its earthly life so madly?

Her detestation of Mrs. Cantrell Curnock increased with every moment. She found herself championing the cause of Leonard Verrall with a violence which she would have found ludicrous, could she have looked upon it calmly. She felt as if this unknown young man were an intimate friend, someone whose tastes and habits she knew, and with whom she found herself altogether in sympathy.

"*Dare I trust the same to you?*"

He had dared, and she had proved unworthy of his venture of faith. She was full of shame and remorse. If the thing could be undone, she was going to undo it.

Her room lay mysterious and quiet in the rich glow of firelight when she entered. She would not kindle the lamp. Removing her hat and outdoor wraps, she sat down in the high-backed chair, and for the first time in her life set herself to call without a voice—to use that "method of communication other than that of the recognized channels of the senses," with which hitherto she had been utterly unfamiliar.

It was half-past seven. She never remembered hearing the latch-key later than half-past six. The room was empty of all but herself—she knew and felt that it was. Her repentance and her inward summons grew more vehement. Without uttering the word, she yet repeated it in her brain, over and over—"Leonard! Leonard!".

She did not know how long she sat in her chair, rigid and in concentration. But at last she heard the familiar sound of the key thrust in the door below. She sat forward in the firelight, every muscle tense. He came upstairs very slowly, entered, and closed the door. There his footfall paused. He was waiting.

Every pulse in her body beat, every nerve thrilled.

"Come," she said, aloud—"come; I am waiting for you. I am calling for you."

She held her breath. If the steps were not heard again, what should she do? If she were not certain whether he was there or not, she thought she might go mad. She heard him advance, still slowly and as if in doubt of his welcome.

"Sit facing me—in that chair," she said, tremulously. "Oh, why can I not see you? It would not be so awful if I could see you! Can't you do something—*anything*—to make me sure that you are there?"

A sigh released itself from the silence. It might have been merely the leaping fire, or the draught; but it sounded like a sigh. It was followed by a movement. This was impossible to define, but a person who had been seated might have made such small sounds in rising from his seat. A wonderful sensation was upon her—the same that she had felt in the passage last night when his nearness made her cry out, "I am afraid of you!" It was as though he was very near her—overshadowing her. By a tremendous effort of self-control, she neither recoiled nor screamed; and she felt, unmistakably, the gentle but firm touch of lips upon her forehead.

"Oh!" she cried, gasping. "Oh! Then you have forgiven me!"

It was all she was capable of. The room reeled about her, and she lost all sense of outward things.

When she became conscious Mrs. Moon, with a face of miserable apprehension, was standing over her.

She forced a smile as she sat up. "Have I been asleep?"

"Asleep? Was it asleep, miss? I thought you was ill," said the woman, suspiciously.

"Ill? No, I never was better," cried Rosalind, with a little laugh. "And I am so hungry. Why, it's nine o'clock! I did a hard day's work, and then had to help Mrs. Curnock with her guests. I expect my nap will do me good."

The relieved Mrs. Moon beamed upon her. "Oh, dear," said she; "you are a sensible young lady! Not like some."

Rosalind did not inquire her meaning. She knew it too accurately.

While she ate her supper her mind was busy. Her heart beat with long, deep strokes when she recalled that visionary caress. With that she had crossed a Rubicon, and belonged to the ghost of Leonard Verrall. Why was he there? What did he want of her? This was the thing she had to ascertain. His questing spirit was seeking the place it knew on earth—with what purpose?

Many times it had wandered thither, finding the old home in possession of those who could never understand. Then he had found her. It struck her that there was something here in the nature of wireless telegraphy. She was, as it were, an instrument tuned to respond.

What she had to do was to discover his desire. In all the ghost stories she had read the restless spirit sought the satisfaction of

some unfulfilled purpose. She became conscious that her ignorance in such matters was deplorable. Surely, among all those books, there must be some that dealt with psychic subjects!

The moment she had done supper she went carefully round the well-filled shelves, and found a large supply of the kind of literature she sought. One volume of well-authenticated cases of thought-transference seemed curiously in touch with her own experience.

In the collection one anecdote in particular held her attention. It was one which was vouched for by the late Rev. Norman Macleod:—

A ship was steaming through tropical latitudes. One day the captain, walking on the deck, saw through the window of his cabin a strange man, seated, and apparently writing. He noted the cap worn by this man, the colour of his beard and coat. Entering the cabin as quickly as he could, he found it vacant. But upon a sheet of blank paper which lay on the table were written these words: "Steer E.S.E., for God's sake!" The captain was so impressed by this incident that he actually altered his course; and after some hours sighted a raft, on which were several men, dying of thirst. Among them he remarked the man who had sat in his cabin. When questioned, this man said he had had a curious dream, in which he saw the ship which afterwards rescued them, entered the cabin, and wrote his message.

Rosalind asked herself straight out why that particular story appealed to her so forcibly. She knew why. It was because, in that story, the transmitter of the spirit message *was a living man*.

When, very late, she closed her books and went to bed, she had no fear and no uneasiness. She slept excellently, and awoke with that odd sense of joy which results when a woman has just, for the first time, learned that she is beloved.

The next night, when she came back to her rooms, the spirit of adventure was strong upon her.

She seized again upon her book of psychic stories, and was carrying it to her place when accidentally she let it drop, and a half-sheet of paper fluttered out and fell to the floor.

Upon it was written, in a clear, bold hand:—

"In case of my disappearance, my last wishes will be found in the secret drawer of the bureau. Touch the spring inside the top right-hand small drawer, and the pilaster will move out.—L. V."

Up sprang Rosalind, and, after a few minutes' fumbling, found the spring. Out

"GIRL-LIKE, IT WAS AT THE PHOTOGRAPH THAT SHE LOOKED FIRST."

came a slice of the bureau, about the size and shape of a book. In the thin drawer which it contained were two or three papers and a photograph. Girl-like, it was at the photograph that she looked first. It showed a face rather interesting than beautiful—a long, prominent chin, and eyes full of fire. The thick, curling hair looked dark in the picture. The eyes met her own, full and penetrating. She thought of the kiss and blushed scarlet, standing there spellbound.

It was all embittered by the inscription underneath: "To be given to Adela after my death." Adela was the Christian name of the great novelist.

Besides this there was an open envelope, addressed to Mrs. Moon. Ought she to look

within? As she hesitated, she saw that there were initials faintly scrawled in pencil above the address—"R. M.," her own initials. The same faint, wavering pencil had been drawn through the name of Mrs. Moon.

It was enough for Rosalind. Leonard Verrall belonged to her, his room belonged to her. She was going to read what she felt convinced he wished her to read.

"Should I disappear, I wish my rooms and all in them to be left as they are for a period of twelve months. Enclosed are four five-pound notes, for the rent of them during that time. Should no further instructions come from me at the end of the year, I shall be dead, and Mrs. Moon is at liberty to do what she pleases with all my things."

The date of this letter was February of the year then fast drawing to its close. He had not, then, yet been missing for twelve months.

It was easy to guess what had happened. He had written down, upon the paper she had that day found, a memorandum of the spot wherein he had hidden his final directions. This half-sheet he had placed, before leaving the house for the last time, on the table, or where he thought it should be easily seen by Mrs. Moon. That good lady, whenever she found a book lying open on the table, had the habit, as Rosalind knew well, of taking up any paper or note which lay near, and putting it in to mark the place before moving the volume in order to spread the cloth. This admirable habit had doubtless caused her to put the message meant for her own eyes away in the book, which had been ever since untouched.

There came to Rosalind the determination to say nothing about her find until the twelve months had expired. He knew that his rooms were not now being profaned. His possessions were safe with her. She fastened up the documents in a sealed envelope, and replaced them in the secret drawer. The photograph she had not the strength of mind to put away. She hid it, but in a place where she could easily find it; and she took the habit, at times when she was secure from intrusion, of getting it out, propping it up against a book, and talking to it.

These chances grew, however, rarer. Her introduction to the neighbourhood at the Moor Edge tea-party had borne as its fruit a crop of invitations. She went out a good deal, for everybody found her charming. The vicar's wife enlisted her help for such matters as Christmas decorations and the school feast. She spent her Christmas with the Bensons, was taken by them to one or two balls, and found herself quite in demand.

It was a good thing that these social distractions were thrown in the girl's way; for, oddly enough, there was a lull in her psychic experiences. For two or three weeks no key was thrust into the street-door by ghostly hands. Yet, for all that, there was never the sense of desertion of which Rosalind had been conscious on the night when she sent Leonard away. She concluded that, having found his messages, she had accomplished his will.

On the last night of the old year she had been to the vicarage for a children's party. When she returned, rather late, there lay on the hall slab a letter, with a very curious address:—

"To the young lady lodging at 7, Harbour Row."

This letter bore an American stamp and a postmark of one of the more Western States. She had no friend in the Western Hemisphere, yet the document must be intended for her. She carried it upstairs and opened it. Thus it ran:—

Am I mad, or is this possible? Have you any real existence, or are you merely the child of my dreams and fancies? I can hardly think so, for you always seem the same. Of late I have barely dropped asleep before I am back in the old room, with the lamplight, the books—and *you*.

Is it true that you have taken away the stuffed kingfisher and put a good clock in its place? Did you really meet me on the stairs and bid me begone because I frightened you? Is all this fact, though seen in sleep—or only the craving of an increasing delirium of home-sickness? Above all, is it true that you called me back, that you bade me do something—anything—to let you know that I was really there—and that *I kissed you?*

I hardly know what I write; but to the best of my knowledge and belief you did find the message in a book, and you have seen the photo, and know the outward semblance of the man who now speaks to you. If any of this wild stuff be true, I implore you to write. Send me your picture, tell me your name. And don't go away. For pity's sake, stop there—give me something to which to turn in my dream hours; for, waking, life offers me little. After sending this, I shall do my best to wake, if I find myself dreaming of you. I want to be certain. If I let this delusion carry me too far, it may destroy us.

Yours altogether—if you exist—

LEONARD VERRALL.

One cannot describe what were the girl's feelings upon the perusal of this letter. A rushing fire and a creeping chill seemed alternately to rule her mood. This power that was wielded by the man who wrote to her was, after all, a dreadful thing. The

poem, "Mesmerism," recurred to her mind:—

> First I will pray. Do thou
> Who ownest the soul,
> Yet wilt grant control
> To another, nor disallow
> For a time—restrain me now!

The thing that soothed her most was the last sentence of his letter. He had the sense of obligation. He saw the necessity of restraint in dealing with a force so little understood. She replied at once as follows:—

> It is all true. I am here, and I am conscious of you. My name is Rosalind Moore. Of course I thought you were dead. But I think you must be alive, or you could not write and post a letter—and that makes all the difference. When Leonard Verrall was alive he loved Mrs. Cantrell Curnock. I am not at all like her. If you were dead I wanted to help you. If you are alive I suppose you can help yourself.
>
> Anyway, I shall not leave this house before the anniversary of the day you went away—the 18th of February.

After the dispatch of that letter, Rosalind never heard the latch-key again but once, and that one time she was so nearly asleep that she could not feel sure. It was about three weeks after the dispatch of her missive, and she had come indoors so tired after her long day's work that she had dozed in her chair after tea. In her dreams she thought she heard the well-known sound, and at the time she thought that she started awake. Her ear caught the footfalls, very swift and eager, but hushed, as if the comer came by stealth and did not wish to be overheard.

There was no pause after the gentle opening and closing of the door. The steps came quickly on, up to the hearth, to the place where the girl sat. This time she was far more terrified. It had been a mere abstraction whose lips had pressed her forehead. But now the face of Leonard Verrall, full of life and vigour, and with eyes expressive of untold things, came so vividly before her that she could have sworn she really saw it, against the dark wall behind. In her helpless panic she yet dared not beg him to go away; she felt that she must, as it were, stand her ground. But she knew there was fear in her eyes as she gazed at the visionary face. Did its expression change? It faded—it had never been there—it was her imagination . . .

But her hand, which lay upon her knee, felt the imprint of a lingering kiss, as different as possible from that first kiss which had touched her brow. As before, the shock of the experience rendered her for a time unconscious; and when she awoke she was ready to persuade herself that she had dreamed. Nothing more happened; and towards the end of January her mind became much occupied by some private theatricals which the Bensons were getting up, and in which she was, much to her surprise, invited to play a leading part.

One night she had just come in from a rehearsal. It was about ten o'clock, and she was tired. But she had a letter to write, so, instead of going straight upstairs to bed, she turned into her sitting-room, lit the lamp, and began to loosen her furs at the throat and to take off her hat, when, with a leap of the nerves, she heard the sound of the latch-key below. Terror seized her. She had told Mrs. Moon that she need not wait up for her; and now it crossed her mind that she had not fastened the door, since she meant to run out and post her letter before going to bed.

In a fever of apprehension she heard the well-known sequence of sounds. But when the footfalls reached her door a new thing happened—a perfectly unprecedented thing. *The intruder knocked.* There was a long pause. If there had been any way out other than by that haunted door Rosalind would have fled; as it was, she stood like one rooted to the floor, white as ashes, shaking, ready to faint, wholly unable to reply. After an interval there came another knock. With a feeling that she had tampered so long with the powers of darkness that one time more was a matter of small import, she faltered out—"Come in!"

Whereupon Leonard Verrall came in.

When she saw him in bodily presence she opened her mouth to shriek. It is the unexpected which is so profoundly alarming. When Rosalind said "Come in!" she expected to *hear* the door open and to *hear* some invisible person enter. To most people this would be a far more alarming circumstance than to see a fellow-creature obey the homely summons. It is all a question of what you expect.

Her self-control gave way under the shock of surprise. "Oh, no, no! I can't bear this! Don't touch me! Don't come near me!" she threw out, almost inarticulate in her deadly fear.

He did not approach; he just stood by the door, with a triumphant smile which her remarkable type of welcome did not seem to trouble.

"It's rather wonderful," he said, softly, "that you should not fear a ghost, but that you should fear—me!"

He let this sink in. She stood where she was, while the mortal terror gave way, first

to relief, then to astonishment, then to a new kind of fright, which brought the blood rushing to her face.

"Then—then you are not a ghost?"

far to reassure her. Moreover, as he drew near she saw how nervous he, too, was feeling, and that completed the business.

"Just tell me straight out—you are alive,

"JUST TELL ME STRAIGHT OUT—YOU ARE ALIVE, ARE YOU NOT?"

"No fear!"

"I—I still can't believe that you're real."

"If it wouldn't frighten you," said Leonard, coaxingly, "I'll soon convince you——"

"If you're coming," cried Rosalind, in a hurry, "come very slowly."

"You do set a fellow difficult things to do!" replied Leonard, as he advanced with caution.

His method of expressing himself went

are you not? If you are dead, I don't think I can bear it," she quavered.

"Oh, Rosalind—then you want me to be alive?"

"More than I have ever wanted anything, I believe."

"Then we can soon settle about the reality," replied Leonard, joyously. "'The shadow and she are one,'" he quoted, triumphantly, as his strong, warm hands clasped hers.

A Census of Animals.

Compiled for the first time.

OW vague are the notions of the number of animals, other than man, who may be said to acknowledge the rule of the King's Government! Of the *feræ naturæ* no person may speak with authority. Only the wildest guess could be made as to the number of foxes, badgers, hares, rabbits, squirrels, rats, and mice. But, on the other hand, why need anybody be indefinite regarding the flocks and herds, the inmates of stable and kennel, even the "harmless, necessary" denizen of kitchen and area? For, in spite of the fact that materials for a fairly accurate enumeration exist, we constantly find the most absurd estimates cited by writers and speakers who, by taking a little pains and devoting a few weeks of inquiry in the Government Departments, studying agricultural and other statistical tables, and consulting zoologists and animal and poultry breeders and fanciers, might arrive at—well, shall we say, an approximately accurate knowledge of a highly interesting subject?

But the trouble is worth taking, and the writer has much pleasure in submitting to the Government, in this year of the human census, a provisional animal census, which may well pave the way for one undertaken under official auspices. To begin with, a comparative table has been compiled showing the animal population of the United Kingdom at three different periods, beginning with 1811:—

	1811.	1865.	1911.
Pigs ...	2,800,000	3,997,780	3,530,000
Dogs ...	900,000	2,600,000	4,000,000
Goats ...	400,000	650,000	500,000
Deer ...	1,800,000	1,000,000	700,000
Sheep ...	20,000,000	28,000,000	31,751,777
Horses ...	1,600,000	2,200,000	3,400,000
Cats ...	2,500,000	5,000,000	7,850,000
Donkeys.	55,000	100,000	85,000
Poultry...	20,000,000	25,000,000	40,000,000
Cattle ...	4,500,000	8,500,000	11,720,546

In studying the foregoing conspectus the reader must, of course, bear in mind the vast changes in the human population of these isles. Thus in 1811 the total human population was under 20,000,000. In 1911 it is over 45,000,000. But the animals, for reasons which hardly need explaining, have not always kept pace with their masters, and in the case of deer their numbers have dropped to but little more than a third. Then, although there are more pigs and donkeys and goats than there were a century ago, there are fewer than there were in 1865. The most remarkable increase has been in dogs, who have more than quadrupled their numbers, owing to the increase of the urban population; and next to these, cats. The vital statistics of pigs have been affected by the growth of the American pork industry and the rural depopulation in Ireland and the kingdom generally. Thus in 1865 there were, roughly, 4,000,000 pigs; in 1867, 4,221,100; and in 1869, 3,028,394. The diminution continued until 1890, when a rally took place, and British pigs are now recovering their lost ground. But the depopulation of the sties is a matter of national concern, and there should be at least twice the number of porkers now flourishing amongst us. Cows and oxen showed a decrease after 1865, and for nearly twenty years their number was stationary. As regards horses, in 1811 the horse tax seems to have been very general, the total number taxed being 1,187,579. In 1823 the tax was halved, and agricultural horses were exempted. In 1910 the returns of horses used for agricultural purposes only give 1,136,841, or, together with unbroken horses, a total of 1,547,287, a decrease of 7,706 as compared with the figures for 1909. Moreover, nearly a million cab-horses, and those used for purposes of traction, besides Army horses, are to be added to the total, which continues to show a slight decrease over the previous year's figures. This decrease is bound to continue, and in two or three years, at the close of the life of the horses formerly used for traction in towns, the figures are bound to take a big downward jump.

Indeed, the horse is always being threatened with extinction nowadays, but, as Lord Haldane has recently pointed out, if the horse is to become extinct in these islands the process will be a slow one. People who dwell in towns and have the visible reduction of horse-drawn omnibuses and cabs constantly before them are apt to exaggerate the dwindling process; but it is real, nevertheless, and the time will doubtless come when the horse, for purposes of traction in urban communities,

PIGS.

In this and the following diagrams the number of animals in the three countries is shown by the respective sizes of the figures.

will practically have ceased to cut any prominent figure in the world.

The figures relating to dogs are, first of all, based upon the dog tax. In 1811 the tax on hounds and sporting dogs generally was 11s. 6d., that on other dogs being 6s. per annum. A pack of hounds (where compounded) paid £30. From 1823 to 1856 the tax was 12s. for any dog, and £9 for a pack of hounds. When the tax was reduced to 7s. 6d. a great increase of the canine population resulted.

But by far the most interesting figures concerning the enumeration of animals are those which present the numbers contained in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Here we observe extraordinary national discrepancies. We will begin with the pig, that much-maligned animal who bears such a singular physiological likeness to man.

In the United Kingdom there are at this moment, roughly speaking, three and a half million pigs, as against double that number in France, and nearly seven times the number in Germany. The reason for this discrepancy is not far to seek, because we in this country are dependent for our supply of pork chiefly upon the American product, although supplies from other countries are constantly arriving. It used to be the case that in the Sister Isle no small family was without "the gintleman who pays the rint." But the human population of Ireland is naturally responsible for the diminution of the porcine population of that country. It is found in England that pig-keeping on a large scale does not pay. There are 157,627 pigs in Suffolk, which is, therefore, far and away the most "piggy" county in England. In London there are only 1,948 pigs (excluding those bipeds to whom the epithet is in moments of irritation addressed).

In respect of dogs, last year more than 1,900,000 paid licence, but if to this total we add exemptions carefully compiled by the authorities, we arrive at a total of about 4,000,000 for the canine population of the kingdom. France has many fewer than this in numbers, and Germany is far behind, there being, according to the latest statistics, just over 1,000,000 dogs in the empire.

Perhaps the most astonishing misconception relates to deer. Whitaker's "Deer Parks" gives 77,000 deer for England, but, as Mr. J. G. Millais (perhaps the foremost authority on the subject) writes us: "There are twice that number now in England alone. The number in Scotland I roughly estimate as 6,000 stags killed annually, and only one stag in ten is shot; that gives 60,000 stags alone, and there are at least ten times that number of hinds in Scotland; therefore, roughly,

England	154,000 deer.
Scotland	660,000 ,,
Ireland	2,500 ,,
	816,500 deer.

"I should say there are nearly 1,000,000 deer wild and in parks in the British islands.

"I have myself," Mr. Millais continues, "seen 3,000 deer in one open valley (Strath-

DOGS.

DEER.

vaich) at one time—that is to say, driving in a road through the valley occupying half an hour. I have seen a herd of 400 wild stags all together at the Forest of the Black Mount in 1887."

These interesting facts further indicate the numerical preponderance of the British Isles as regards deer, which, compared with the lower estimates of other authorities, may be reasonably placed at 700,000.

The popularity of goats in France and Germany is largely accounted for by the enormous consumption of goats' milk. At one time there was a far larger number of goats in the United Kingdom, but these have gradually dwindled down to little more than half a million. A member of the Goat Society thinks they could not possibly exceed 600,000.

Sheep, on the other hand, are far more numerous in the United Kingdom, as was to be expected, than in either France or Germany. With the decrease of arable land, many thousands of acres have been turned into pasture.

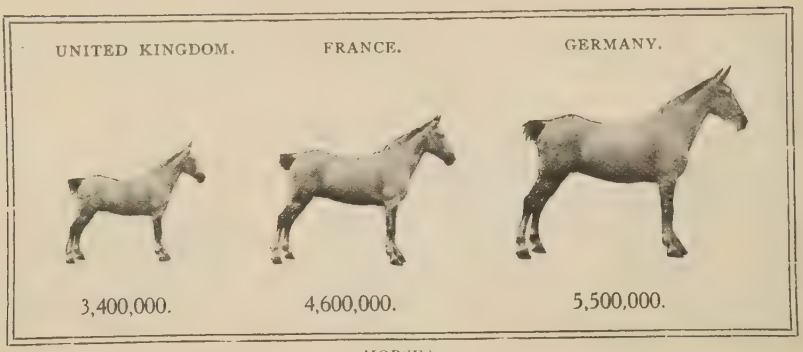
In the same way, Germany being a more agricultural country, the progress of locomotion not being so great in towns as with us, it might naturally be expected to be in excess of horses, and this is shown by the figures, the last estimate of the equine population of the Fatherland being 5,500,000, as against

GOATS.

4,600,000 in France and 3,400,000 in the United Kingdom.

One is apt at first sight to marvel at the figures relating to cats in Germany as compared with the United Kingdom. The wonder is a little abated when we have the statement of an eminent authority that the reason why

SHEEP.



HORSES.

England is a feline paradise is wholly owing to ill-regulated household economics and the national profusion in waste. "In France and Germany every morsel in the larder is accounted for; nothing is thrown away that affords nutriment. In England, on the other hand, the daily kitchen refuse is sufficient to feed a population half as large again. This by a deputy anxious to impose a heavy tax on grimalkin. These figures, however, have been shown to be excessive. The British Consul-General in Berlin writes: "I am assured by competent authorities that the figure of one cat to twenty households would probably err on the excess side—this including the rural provinces of the south, where the

CATS.

explains the enormous cat and dog population." Another hypothesis—more ingenious than sound, perhaps—bases itself on the million more spinsters in this country than in Germany, as if a law, "one spinster, one cat," actually existed. At all events, the German Chancellor has been furnished with figures showing 640,000 cats in the empire animal is much more common than in Prussia. As regards Berlin, I may say from personal observation that a cat is very rarely seen, either in the streets or in houses."

Donkeys thrive better in Spain, perhaps, than in any country in Europe, but there is no reason why they should not flourish to a much larger extent in northern lands. For-

DONKEYS.

merly they did so in the British Isles, but their numbers have now fallen to 85,000, whereas in France there are 363,000, or more than four times as many. In Germany the donkey population is only 19,642. They have the past fifteen years, and there are signs that the increase will be more than maintained.

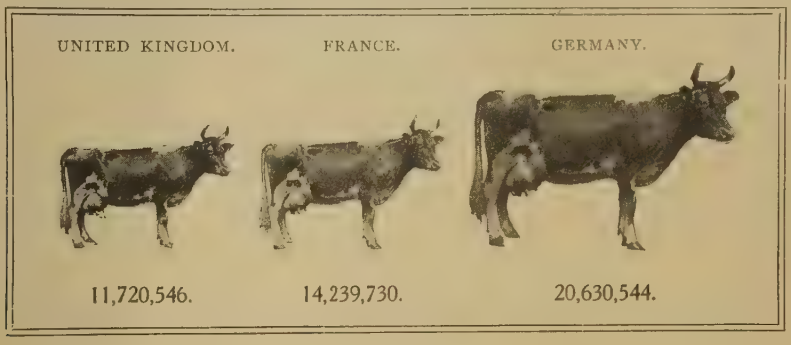
To pass from a small biped to a large quadruped, we may note that there are twice as many cows and oxen in Germany as in

POULTRY.

there no Donkey Society as in Britain, of which the Earl of Lonsdale is president.

We now come to poultry. Here undeniably France leads, with Germany a distant second. The problem of poultry raising has been better solved by our neighbours than with us, although, according to the editor of the *Poultry World*, great strides have recently been made in the United Kingdom. The last official figures were 28,944,249, but this has now risen to upwards of 40,000,000 within the United Kingdom, and over six millions more than in France.

On the whole our figures lead to most interesting conclusions. Whatever we may say about the human element in the three leading countries in Europe, the representatives of the most familiar four-footed creatures who came out of the ark show no signs of degeneration or decay. The fact is that even their present numbers in these three countries exceed those of man.



COWS AND OXEN.

[*The writer begs to express his acknowledgments to the Statistical Secretaries to the Board of Agriculture and the Board of Trade; to Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, Secretary of the Zoological Society; Mr. H. Boyle, British Consul-General at Berlin, Mr. J. G. Millais, and others who have courteously assisted him in the preparation of this article.*]

The Perfidy of Henry Midgley.

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

Illustrated by W. R. S. Stott.

MR. HENRY MIDGLEY glanced a little apprehensively over the top of the letter which he was reading towards his wife. Mrs. Midgley, however, was busy boiling eggs. She went on talking with her eyes rigidly fixed upon the minute-glass and a spoon clutched determinedly in her hand.

"If it's a matter of a hundred pounds or so," she declared—"why, what I should say is, take no notice of it at all. Put it into the Post Office Savings Bank, and let it be for a rainy day. If it's more—well, there's heaps of ways of having a good time, and the sooner we know about it the better. You'd better trot along and see those people, Henry, in your dinner-hour."

Mr. Midgley was slight and sandy, with a fair moustache and a mass of obstreperous hair. At present the repose of his features was somewhat marred by an expression of nervous anxiety. He looked first at the letter which he was holding and then at his wife. More than once he seemed on the point of saying something, but at the last moment changed his mind. He was evidently in a state of indecision. Mrs. Midgley, however, had just then only two objects in life—to see that those eggs were perfectly boiled and to start her husband off by the eight-forty train to the City with a satisfied inner man and a well-brushed exterior.

"Suppose it was more, now," Mr. Midgley began at last. "Just for the sake of argument, say it was enough to launch out a bit, eh—for me to join the golf club and for you to go up to town for a *matinée* now and then. How does that strike you, Rose? What do you want to do about it, eh?"

Mrs. Midgley, with a sigh of relief, pounced upon the two eggs and set them up in their cups. She placed both before her husband and glanced at the clock. Then she poured out the tea.

"First of all," she declared, "I should buy the Fernery."

Mr. Midgley's face fell. It was clear that the acquisition of the Fernery, which was an ugly red-brick structure with a stucco front at the corner of the street, did not appeal to him at all. He thought of the broken-down arbour in a corner of the untidy garden, the decapitated statue, and the stone bay-window, with a little shiver.

"Buy the Fernery!" he repeated, a little despondently. "It isn't a pretty house, Rose."

"It has an appearance," Mrs. Midgley declared. "Besides, it's to be bought cheap."

"You wouldn't care about leaving this neighbourhood, then?" Mr. Midgley ventured.

"Certainly not," his wife replied. "I like it, and because one gets on a bit in the world I see no reason for shaking off one's old friends and trying to buy new ones. Besides, an earthquake wouldn't move mother; and, so long as she's here, I hope I know my duty too well to think of moving. Keep one eye on the clock, Henry."

Mr. Midgley, who had often wished that an earthquake or some less violent eruption of Nature would remove his mother-in-law from the next house but one in the row, scratched his chin thoughtfully.

"Very well, then," he said. "We'll take it that you'd like to buy the Fernery to start with. What else?"

"I should insist upon it," she declared, firmly, "that you never left home in the morning with a nasty pipe in your mouth. I like to see a gentleman smoking a cigar."

Mr. Midgley, who loved his briar and hated all manner of cigars, groaned under his breath.

"Go on," he begged. "Go on, Rose."

Mrs. Midgley continued promptly.

"I should take two front sittings in St. Paul's Church," she announced; "and, as you probably wouldn't have to work so hard in the week, there would be no excuse for your not occupying them with me twice a day on Sundays."

Mr. Midgley wiped his forehead. His tone seemed to become fainter.

"Go on," he murmured. "Please go on, Rose."

Mrs. Midgley began to warm to the subject. She was a pretty little woman, but she had an exceedingly determined mouth.

"I should have a parlour-maid with strings to her cap, and late dinners," she declared. "Also I should be 'at home' one afternoon a week and give tea with two sorts of cake. You would have to come home early from the office and hand things round."

"It might be inconvenient," Mr. Midgley protested, weakly.

"You would have to make it convenient," his wife insisted. "No good starting on that piece of toast, Henry. You have to leave in three minutes, and I must brush you first."

Mr. Midgley gulped down his tea hurriedly.

"While we're on this subject," he remarked, in a tone which had sunk almost to a whisper, "is there anything else you'd be particular about?"

"A good many more," Mrs. Midgley replied. "But I can't think of them all on the spur of the moment. Besides, I never did hold with this fancying business. There's just this little matter, however, I should make a point of. With good claret like they have at the grocers' at the corner of the street at a shilling and three-ha'pence a bottle I'd take care that there wasn't a drop of beer in the house. I can't bear the sight or smell of the stuff—reminds me always of public-houses and the weakness of poor pa who's gone."

Mr. Midgley waited for his opportunity, thrust the letter which he had been reading into his pocket, and buttoned up his coat. This had been the last straw. He was a temperate man, but he liked his glass of beer and he loathed claret.

"Well, well," he said, as he stood up in the passage and submitted himself to vigorous flagellations with the clothes-brush, "it's a pity things ain't likely to turn out our way. A hundred pounds, with ten of it for a mourning-ring, is about my guess."

"And a very nice sum, too, let me tell you, Mr. Midgley," his wife declared, standing back for a moment and surveying her handiwork. "Not a penny of it do we spend, mind. Gracious goodness, give me your hat. You don't mean to tell me that you were going out like that? Why, there's a perfect rim of dust round it. Where you get it all from I can't imagine. There, now, put it on straight. Never mind lighting your pipe; you've only four and a half minutes for the train. Bring home the bacon and the tea for mother, and be sure that you go to the lawyers in the dinner-hour, and don't say a word about any legacy at the office. If they think you've come into money they may keep back your next rise. Hurry off, stupid—no time for nonsense."

Mr. Midgley started for the City without his pipe or a farewell kiss from his wife. That is to say, he started as though he were going to the City, but as soon as he had turned the corner of the street he apparently changed his mind. From that moment his subsequent proceedings became more or less mysterious. He first of all entered a tobacconist's shop, where he purchased an expensive pipe and two ounces of tobacco. On emerging once more into the street, he lingered upon the pavement for a moment, glancing up and down with a casual expression which was distinctly overdone. Satisfied at last that there was no one in sight whom he knew, he summoned a four-wheeled cab from the other side of the road, and threw himself into a corner of the vehicle with a lordly air.

"Station, sir?" the man inquired.

"Drive me to the golf club," Mr. Midgley directed.

The man, who knew him by sight, stared.

"To the golf club," Mr. Midgley repeated, sharply. "I'm not going to the City this morning."

Arrived at his destination, Mr. Midgley sought out the professional.

"I am going to join the golf club here," he announced. "I have a spare morning, and I should like a lesson."

The professional, who found the week-day mornings dull, accepted the suggestion with enthusiasm.

"Have you any clubs, sir?" he asked.

"Not at present," Mr. Midgley admitted. "I waited to buy them from you. Make me up a bagful. The best, mind. I like the look of the shiny ones there. See that I have plenty of them."

"How many balls, sir?"

"I shall want a great many balls," Mr. Midgley replied, firmly. "Several boxes full, at least. Where can we go for our lesson?"

For more than two hours, with his well-brushed silk hat reposing on the turf a few

feet away, Mr. Midgley suffered the alternate joys and pangs of the novice. At the end of that time, streaming with perspiration and stiff in every joint, he settled his account with the professional, fee'd him handsomely, and retired to the club-house. Regardless of the fact that his membership was as yet incomplete, he ordered and consumed with much enjoyment a large-sized bottle of the beverage against which his wife had just

"MR. MIDGLEY SUFFERED THE ALTERNATE JOYS AND PANGS OF THE NOVICE."

issued her dictum. Afterwards he telephoned for a cab, stretched himself out upon the cushions with a pipe in his mouth, caught the eleven-thirty-eight train to town, and strolled into the office, where he was due at five minutes past nine, at precisely a quarter past twelve.

The manner of his entrance upon the scene of his neglected labours was by no means apologetic. It was, in fact, almost jaunty. The newly-purchased pipe was still in his mouth, his shoes were caked with mud, his collar had broken down with the warmth of the exercise, and his ready-made tie was on its way to the back of his ear. From the office-boy to the head clerk they all stared at him speechless. The principal of the firm, who happened to be passing through the office, surveyed him with strong disapproval.

"Is this your first appearance this morning, may I ask?" he inquired.

Mr. Midgley nodded amiably, and glanced at the clock.

"I am a bit late, aren't I?" he remarked, in friendly fashion.

"Have you any excuse to offer?" his employer demanded.

Mr. Midgley shook his head.

"Can't think of one," he admitted. "The fact is, it was such a fine morning that I stopped to have a golf lesson."

Mr. Welby, the head of the firm, was a fat man, with red cheeks and beady eyes. Somehow the fact of these physical deficiencies had never seemed more apparent than at the present moment. The longer he gazed at his clerk the fatter and redder he seemed to become. He was positively bristling with rage.

"Are you drunk, Mr. Midgley?" he demanded. "How dare you come to business

over three hours late and talk about golf lessons? Have you taken leave of your senses, may I ask, sir?"

"The fact is," Mr. Midgley explained, genially, "I've only come to get my office coat. I've decided to leave. It's a rotten sort of shop, this, anyway. Hours too long and screw too short. I'm fed up with it. Hand over my coat, there's a good fellow, Matthew."

Mr. Welby was threatened with apoplexy. Mr. Midgley listened to his flow of language with an interest which speedily merged into something like admiration. He backed slowly out and stood with the open door in his hand for the last few seconds.

"Steady, sir, steady!" he interposed at last. "Don't overdo it, Mr. Welby, sir. It's as good as anything I ever listened to of its sort, but go steady, sir, or you'll do yourself an injury. Is that all?"

Mr. Midgley dodged a letter-book and thrust his head through the door again a moment later.

"About that trifle of salary you were speaking of depriving me of, sir," he said; "put it in your own pocket and stand yourself a drink from me. I'm feeling a bit independent this morning about the ha'pence. I dare say it's the spring coming on. Ta-ta, Welby! So long, you fellows!"

Hot, but triumphant, Mr. Midgley stepped into the street with his office coat on his arm. Every now and then, as he made his leisurely progress towards a restaurant which up till to-day had been only a name to him, he stopped to chuckle. Then a sudden thought sent a cold shiver through him. He snatched out the letter from his pocket and hurried to the address of the lawyers from whom it had come. His reception there should have itself been sufficient reassurance. He put it into plain words, however.

"There's no possibility of any mistake about this letter of yours?" he demanded.

The lawyer shook his head.

"None whatever."

"It is an absolute fact, then," Mr. Midgley persisted, "that I, Henry Midgley, of St. Clement Villas, Golder's Green, am entitled by the will of the late Charles Midgley, of Huddersfield, to the sum of thirty-five thousand pounds?"

"Quite correct," the lawyer agreed. "If you are still feeling any doubt about it we shall be glad to advance you any reasonable sum you may require. Your banking account will be in order for you to-morrow."

Mr. Midgley accepted fifty pounds and went on his way to the restaurant for which he had been bound when assailed by that sudden wave of doubt. Undeterred by its splendours, he ordered a hearty lunch, his enjoyment of which was greatly enhanced by the near presence of his late employer, whose stony stare he met with a genial nod and an upraised glass. Mr. Welby changed his seat, breathing heavily.

"Surly old gentleman," Mr. Midgley declared, pleasantly, to the head waiter, with whom he was talking. "I sha'n't ask him to play me a game of billiards afterwards."

In due course he finished his lunch, paid his bill, and went out. He drank coffee at a Mecca close at hand, played dominoes, and afterwards billiards, with a lordly disregard of time. He caught the proper train home, however, and sat down to his evening meal at the appointed hour.

"Fifty pounds, I guess, and half of it to go for a mourning-ring," Mrs. Midgley declared, as she bustled in with the sardines and cold mutton. "I hate those mourning-rings, anyway."

"Wrong," Mr. Midgley declared, cheerfully. "It's a hundred."

Mrs. Midgley looked intently into the teapot. Her husband looked at her and sighed. In her way she was distinctly pretty, but her devotion to her household duties was almost an obsession. Mr. Midgley sometimes wished she would remember that he too was one of them. It was a regrettable fact that she devoted much more pains towards keeping his house spotless and himself well-clothed and fed than to anything else in life.

"One hundred pounds is a real nest-egg," she declared, swaying the teapot to and fro. "You'll remember what I decided, Henry. It's to be the Post Office Savings Bank, mind."

Midgley sighed and told a falsehood. He was beginning to find this sort of thing quite easy.

"It's there already, my dear," he murmured.

Henceforth Mr. Midgley embarked upon a course of deceit, in the meshes of which he became more completely involved day by day. He left home always at the usual time, but never, alas, for the City. The mornings he spent at the golf club, to the great enrichment of the fortunate professional there, who was speedily coming to regard this eccentric visitor as his chief source of income. In a suit of clothes sent by stealth from the establishment of a sporting tailor direct to the golf club, Mr. Midgley, who changed there

"HIS STONY STARE HE MET WITH A GENIAL NOD AND AN UPRAISED GLASS."

every morning, pursued his new avocation with relentless and amazing industry. At midday he travelled first-class to London and lunched at a popular restaurant, generally standing treat to one of his late fellow-clerks or acquaintances. Every evening he returned by his usual train to his usual meal. And every evening he felt the same twinges of conscience as he entered his neat little home and received the methodical and conscientious caress of his managing little wife. He dared not bring her presents for fear of being rebuked for extravagance, and their visits to the theatre were laid down by law as enterprises to be taken three times in the year only. With a sort of morbid desire for relief at any price, he led her on to talk of the Fernery, the greenhouse she would have built from the drawing-room, her scheme of linoleum for the hall. He probed her base worship of a mirror-tainted suite of plush-covered furniture in a neighbouring emporium. He encouraged her to dilate upon gentility with special reference to silk hats in the day-time, visits from the vicar's wife, regular attendance at church, and the supreme advantages of red wine over all malt liquors. After such times he felt stronger.

Nevertheless, Nemesis was inevitable, and Nemesis came. Mrs. Midgley's cousin, who was on the stage—quite respectably—and engaged to a clerk in a wholesale drapery firm, made a special visit to Golder's Green, and brought with her the full account of Mr. Midgley's misdeeds, so far as regards the City part of them, at any rate. It being the morning sacred to the offices of the local charwoman, the two ladies proceeded out

into the country to indulge in their confidential talk. And their way lay across the golf-links.

"Fore!" cried Mr. Midgley, who, with only two strokes a hole, was one up on the professional and wanted to approach the green.

The two ladies never moved. Miss Ellen Darcy—which was the stage name of the cousin—was gripping Mrs. Midgley by the arm.

"What he's doing, my dear, is plain enough," she exclaimed, with vigour. "He never banked that hundred pounds, not he! He's having the time of his life, that's what he's having! Half-crown tips to porters and warehousemen; free lunches and wine to all his friends; and travelling first-class, if you please, just as bold as anything! Why, it make's one's blood boil! And you mean to tell me, my dear, that he hasn't given you so much as a pair of gloves?"

"Fore!" cried Mr. Midgley, who was getting impatient.

"He's been home to supper at the usual time every evening," Mrs. Midgley declared, with a little catch in her voice. "Not once has he even missed the train!"

"There's plenty of mischief to be got into in the afternoons, my dear," Miss Darcy reminded her cousin. "Besides, he wants to keep it all dark until the money's gone, so that he can have his fling properly. What on earth does that funny little man want?"

Mr. Midgley, who stood now upon the edge of the green, was brandishing his putter and shaking with virtuous indignation.

"Get out of the way, there!" he cried. "Can't you see you're stopping my ball? How dare—— Rose!"

Mr. Midgley, notwithstanding the disguise of his tweed knickerbocker suit, was discovered. He broke off in the middle of his sentence; but, unfortunately for the dignity of his appearance, he forgot to close his mouth. His wife, who, save once or twice on Bank Holidays, had never seen him except in a black coat and silk hat, looked him up and down in an amazement which was at first pitiful. Then she took one step towards him.

"Mind my ball!" he cried, weakly.

"SHE KICKED IT MORE FAIRLY IN THE MIDDLE THAN HER DISCONSOLATE HUSBAND OFTEN HIT IT WITH HIS DRIVER."

Mrs. Midgley, who, for reasons of economy, wore thick boots, kicked his ball, and kicked it more fairly in the middle than her disconsolate husband often hit it with his driver.

She gathered up her skirts and turned her back upon him.

"You and your ball!" she cried, furiously. "You and your ball, indeed!"

The two ladies, with their heads in the air, walked off together. Mr. Midgley, who was something of a philosopher, discussed the fate of the hole with the professional, yielded it to him with a sigh, and finished his round. Afterwards he went manfully to St. Clement Villas, and found the house locked up.

"Gone away with all her luggage," the next-door neighbour declared, with gusto. "Such a to-do as never was, sending for cabs and that, and a man to help with the boxes. Went off with a young lady, too, who might be all she should be, but didn't look it. Such goings on! Come and sit down a bit, Mr. Midgley, and have a chat."

Mr. Midgley went instead to the station, and saw the back of the train. He then solaced himself with half a pint of beer and filled his pipe while he waited for the next.

"I'll have to take on the Fernery and the red wine," he admitted to himself, cheerlessly. "Never mind. It's been all right this last month, and it's the little woman's turn, anyway."

Mrs. Midgley was a young woman of resources and determination, and, having made up her mind to disappear, she did so most completely and effectually. Mr. Midgley visited one after another of her relations without the slightest result, except the provocation of a stream of curious questions. Last of all, he tackled Miss Darcy.

"Now, it's no use your telling me you don't know where Rose is, because you do," he declared, having finally cornered her.

"Of course I know," she admitted; "but wild horses will never drag her address from me, you deceitful, faithless spendthrift. Why, to look at you makes me boil. You and your smart clothes, indeed! Have you paid for them yet?"

Mr. Midgley took no offence. He was far too much in earnest.

"I've paid for them all right, and I'll pay for a diamond ring for you if you'll tell me where to find Rose," he declared.

Miss Darcy laughed scornfully.

"Diamond ring, indeed!" she exclaimed. "Haven't you come to the end of that hundred pounds yet?"

"It was more than a hundred pounds," Mr. Midgley said, firmly. "It was a great deal more."

"The greater pig you, then," Miss Darcy declared. "Although, mind you, I don't believe a word of it. Now be off with you. If you follow me about I'll speak to the police straight away."

"But I want my wife," Mr. Midgley protested.

"Find her, then," Miss Darcy retorted. "You don't deserve a wife. Makes a respectable girl feel like a Suffragette to think of such as you!"

Mr. Midgley did his best. He bought the Fernery, installed his mother-in-law there in splendour which seemed to her positively regal, ordered in two dozen of claret, and began to smoke cigars. Then he took a suite of rooms in Duke Street, replenished his wardrobe, and plunged into life. Being handicapped, however, by a weak stomach, an indifferent digestion, and an unquenchable fidelity to his wife, he found the process alike painful and unsatisfying. At the end of a month he was sick of it. He sought out Miss Darcy again, but this time he was wise. He took the ring with him. Miss Darcy was swept off her feet.

"Well, I never did!" she gasped, turning it over in her hand. "So you're really rich, are you, Mr. Midgley?"

"I've got thirty-five thousand pounds," Mr. Midgley declared, sadly; "and it's no use to me without my wife."

Miss Darcy relented.

"Well, I will say you are one to persevere," she admitted. "I've got Rose a shop at the Hilarity with me. She's in the third row of the chorus. Her stage name is Miss Morris."

Mr. Midgley, with evidence before him of the power of diamonds, paid another visit to the jewellers. Long before the curtain went up that evening he was in his place in the stalls, fidgeting restlessly about. When the first act did begin he was almost demented, because Rose was certainly not there. With the second scene, however, he felt a wave of relief. A mist was before his eyes. His heart pounded against his ribs. Rose was sitting upon an upturned milking-tub, wearing the abbreviated costume of a shepherdess in some presumably tropical country. He almost blushed when he realized what she must have been through before she had consented to don that costume. On the whole, he was bound to admit it was becoming.

He never took his eyes off her until the curtain went down. Then he made his way boldly to the back and handed the little note which he had prepared to the box-keeper, together with a liberal offering.

Miss Morris was requested to take supper

with an unknown admirer. When the answer came back in the affirmative he boiled with rage. The box-keeper stared at him as he strode out. He could not even console himself with the hope that she might have recognized his handwriting, for he had carefully printed his few words of invitation. It was disgraceful of her! Supper with an unknown admirer, indeed!

It was a wet night, and long before the last act was over Mr. Midgley was making a nuisance of himself, crushed up against the stage-door with an umbrella in his hand and a taxicab waiting. He received at least half-a-dozen snubs from young ladies who were perfect strangers to him, reverses which he bore with the utmost equanimity as soon as he discovered his mistake. When at last Rose came out, she was so heavily veiled that if she had not been wearing the jacket in which she had gone away he might almost have failed to recognize her.

"Miss Morris?" he said, timidly, holding the umbrella over her with one hand and raising his hat with the other.

She looked him in the face, and he quailed.

"Are you my unknown admirer?" she asked.

"I am," he admitted, humbly.

"If you'd been another day without letting me know about it," she declared, "I'd never have spoken to you again. This your taxi?"

"Yes, dear."

She gave him her hand, and let him squeeze it as he handed her in.

"Savoy!" he called out, boldly, and immediately pulled both windows up.

"Do wait until I loosen my veil!" she begged.

"'DO WAIT UNTIL I LOOSEN MY VEIL!' SHE BEGGED."

CAREERS IN PICTURES.

II.—LORD KITCHENER.

From a Photo. by Daly & Son, Tralee.

BIRTHPLACE.

Gunsborough Villa, Co. Kerry, the house in which Horatio Herbert Kitchener was born on the 24th June, 1850. Though of English parentage, he is an Irishman by birth and upbringing.

AS A CADET.

When fourteen, he left Ireland, spent some time at a French school, and then joined the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

IN 1878.

At this time, and for the four previous years, he had been employed by the Palestine Exploration Fund.

IN CAMP WITH A SURVEY PARTY.

Lord Kitchener's military career has so eclipsed his earlier work that it is often forgotten that before going to Egypt he spent several years surveying Palestine and Cyprus. This interesting photograph, showing him in camp with some of the members of a survey party, is reproduced by the courtesy of the Palestine Exploration Fund. One of the members of the party has recalled the cheerful way in which Kitchener used to rough it. "We none of us thought much about our toilets, and he least of all. Why, after a few months' travelling about in Palestine he looked more like a tramp than an officer of Her Majesty's Army. His clothes wouldn't have fetched a three-penny-bit at any 'old clo' shop' in Whitechapel." He was occupied in this interesting work in the East from 1874 till 1882.

EARLY YEARS IN EGYPT.

Major Kitchener, with his guides, at Korti, in 1885, just before the start across the desert in the effort to reach Khartoum in time to save Gordon. The fact that Kitchener was a member of this Relief Expedition is, perhaps, not so well remembered as it should be.

From a Photo. by P. Dittrich.

AS SIRDAR.

Colonel Kitchener was appointed Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Army, in 1892, on the resignation of General Grenfell.

From a Photo. by Rene Bull.

DIRECTING THE BATTLE OF OMDURMAN.

The Battle of Omdurman, in which the Dervishes were completely routed and the Khalifa finally overthrown, was fought on the 2nd September, 1898. The Dervishes displayed indomitable courage, but were no match for a force armed with modern weapons.

THE SIRDAR'S REVIEW AFTER DONGOLA.

On the successful termination of the Dongola Campaign, in 1896, the first great move against the power of the Khalifa, the Sirdar was raised to the rank of Major-General. Work on the Soudan Military Railway was now pushed forward with all possible speed in preparation for the advance to Khartoum.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE ATBARA.

Mahmoud, one of the Dervish leaders, with his hands bound behind his back, being led past the Sirdar and his staff, after the Battle of the Atbara, in April, 1898. This decisive battle marked another great step forward towards the reclamation of the Soudan from the Mahdi's influence.

IN MEMORY OF GORDON.

Two days after the victory of Omdurman a memorial service was held among the ruins of Gordon's Palace, across the Nile at Khartoum. After nearly fourteen years, Gordon's death had been avenged at last. At the close of the service "there were those who said the cold Sirdar himself could hardly speak or see, as General Hunter and the rest stepped out, according to their rank, and shook his hand. What wonder? He had trodden this road to Khartoum for fourteen years, and he stood at the goal at last."

MEETING WITH MARCHAND AT FASHODA.

Shortly after Omdurman, news reached Lord Kitchener of the presence up the river, at Fashoda, of a small number of troops under the command of a French officer, Major Marchand, who claimed the territory in the name of his country. The Sirdar's tact in dealing with this delicate situation did much to avert the threatened international dispute.

RETURN TO ENGLAND.

The Sirdar now returned to England, when honours and rewards were showered upon him. He was raised to the Peerage, receiving the thanks of both Houses of Parliament, as well as a grant of £30,000. In the above illustration he is seen in the Guildhall receiving a Sword of Honour from the Lord Mayor.

HONOURED BY THE UNIVERSITIES.

In addition to his other honours, two of the Universities conferred on him the degree of LL.D., and he is seen in the accompanying photograph as he appeared in his robes at Cambridge.

ENTERING PRETORIA WITH LORD ROBERTS.

With the exception of the first few months, Lord Kitchener was in South Africa throughout the Boer War, first

as Chief of the Staff to Lord Roberts, and afterwards as Commander-in-Chief. At its conclusion he was created a Viscount and received a grant of £50,000.

MEETING WITH THE BOER GENERALS.

In February, 1901, Lord Kitchener met the Boer Generals at Middelburg, with a view to arranging peace terms, but the conference proved abortive. The figures in the photo. below, reading from left to right, are (back row) Col. Henderson, Van Velden, Major Watson, H. Fraser, Major Maxwell, H. De Jager; (front row) De Wet, Louis Botha, Lord Kitchener, and Col. Hamilton.

From a Photo. by Mayall & Co.

From a Photo. by H. W. Nichols.

HIS ACCIDENT IN INDIA.

In 1902 Lord Kitchener went to India as Commander-in-Chief, and remained till 1909. Soon after going out he met with one of the few serious accidents of his life. His horse, which he had brought from South Africa, and on which he is seen in the above photograph, took fright in the dark and brought its rider into collision with the side of a small tunnel, with the result that Lord Kitchener sustained a broken leg.

AS SPORTSMAN.

A scene in India, showing Lord Kitchener standing beside a tiger he has shot.

LEARNING GOLF.

On his return from his tour of the Far East and Australia Lord Kitchener employed part of his leisure in learning golf. He is here seen playing his first game at North Berwick, under the tuition of George Sayers, brother of the well-known professional, Ben Sayers.

IN FIELD-MARSHAL'S DRESS.

In September, 1909, Lord Kitchener was made a Field-Marshal, and last year was appointed a member of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Early in the present year he paid a visit to British East Africa, where he enjoyed some big-game shooting, and also, if report speaks truly, became a landowner, but returned to take command of the troops during the Coronation festivities.

From a Photo. by Bassano, Ltd.

HIS NEW HOME.

Broome Park, near Canterbury, the beautiful Jacobean house recently purchased by Lord Kitchener, stands in a magnificently-timbered park in one of the most beautiful corners of Kent. The estate is situated in one of the best social and sporting districts of the county, better known to some as the Ingoldsby country.

From a Photo. by Collis.

Gold in the Gutter.

By EDWARD CECIL.

Illustrated by A. Wallis Mills.

THE last throb of the evening life of the Strand was well-nigh spent. A sudden and unexpected shower had swept the famous street almost clear of traffic, and had driven the last loiterers to shelter. An occasional taxicab swished over the wet roadway, the rain-water ran in the gutters, and, overhead, the sky was again becoming clear.

Police-constable X stepped out from the protection of a friendly doorway and walked eastwards. He looked at a clock and reflected that the shower of rain had hastened, by at least a quarter of an hour, the nightly transformation from that pandemonium of crowded traffic, insistent cab-whistles, impatient motor-horns, and noisy motor-buses, which the exodus from the theatres causes, to the few brief hours of quiet which come while the thoroughfare is empty of traffic before the early morning market-carts and motor-trucks break in upon its short rest. From being an organizer and director of traffic, Police-constable X settled down into being a keen-eyed and methodical guardian of law and order.

What an up-to-date journalist might call the psychology of the Strand was well known, in all its little details, to Constable X. He knew the street by day, by evening, and by night. And he prided himself on his knowledge. Now, as night began, he knew what sort of people he might expect to meet. After reaching the corner of Wellington Street he turned westwards and began to meet them.

They were quite ordinary figures of that early hour of the night, and Constable X turned back towards Wellington Street, stifling a yawn. But at the corner of the street he met with a surprise.

At first there seemed nothing unusual about the woman who brushed past him. Her clothing was miserable, and she turned down towards Waterloo Bridge. The bottom of her dress was in rags, her hat was shapeless, her boots were a collection of patches and the sorriest protection to her feet. In all this, however, Constable X found nothing unusual. The poor creature's destination was the easiest thing in the world to guess.

"The Embankment," he remarked to himself without hesitation. He might have ventured a few yards farther and concluded "The river." Such was the abject misery of the woman's clothes.

But something quite unusual suddenly arrested his attention. The woman was not walking as she should have walked. Her body was neither limp nor ill-shapen. Her step was elastic. She and her clothes did not fit, for the utter dejection and physical exhaustion which were usual in such a pilgrim of the night to London's Mecca of misery were quite absent. Instead of her feet dragging in her pitiable boots, her step was business-like, her walk easy and natural.

"Blow me," observed Constable X, "if her hair isn't neat and tidy!"

He was only at fault, however, for a moment.

"Going to do the Embankment for her paper, I guess," he surmised. "A hundred to one there's a pencil and notebook in her pocket. 'A Night on the Embankment, by One Who Has Been There.' Wonder that sort of thing hasn't got stale."

She vanished down the steps, and Constable X turned and walked slowly westwards.

"That Embankment," he reflected, "is one of the regular sights of London."

Scores of journalists have written about the Embankment as it is by night; certain well-known plays have placed a semblance of it behind the footlights, and dozens upon dozens of people have written letters to the papers, published and unpublished, dealing with a blot upon the civilization of the capital of a Christian Empire. It may therefore be

presumed that the reader knows what the Thames Embankment is like between the fall of night and the coming of the grey light of dawn, without being told now any of the harrowing details which make up the picture of that Mecca to which turn, sooner or later, the weary footsteps of most of those men and women in London who reach the dregs of misery.

Besides, this is not an Embankment story. Its action takes place on the Embankment. But the man and woman who came unexpectedly that night to a crisis in their lives are not Embankment "characters," neither do they furnish "a story of the dregs." They were on the Embankment that June night; they brushed shoulders with its misery. To all appearances they were part of it. But they were not.

The woman whom Constable X had understood quite accurately went down the steps by Somerset House, crossed the roadway, and sat down on the first seat she came to.

She sat down and gazed in front of her.

A passer-by would have summed her up in a glance. "Despair," he would have said—"the end of her resources! Hunger, disappointment, failure, without a home and without hope! No, not drink. She does not look like that. But, *perhaps*, some form of crime? About her only resource now—the river."

"'GOING TO DO THE EMBANKMENT FOR HER PAPER, I GUESS,' HE SURMISED."

Such might have been the ready-made conclusions of a passer-by, perhaps supplemented by some reflections, equally ready-made, as to the contrast between the Embankment and the Savoy and the Cecil.

But such comments and reflections in the case of Margaret Wilmore were wide of the mark. That night she had dined at the Lyceum Club, that day she had earned some five guineas from her paper, and instead of her future being the river, it would be, in all likelihood, the very future which she had aspired to and built up to. There was only one way in which the ready-made comments of a possible passer-by would have touched the truth. The keen, intellectual face in such surroundings might have suggested crime. Well, Margaret Wilmore had been in prison.

That June night, however, it seemed that she was out of tune with her work. She had come there for copy. "Interviews on the Embankment" was the title of the series of articles she was doing. They were to be quite the real thing—life-stories, just plain, unvarnished, literally true life-stories.

Well, she had the night before her. There was no need to hurry. The figure at the end of the seat would provide the first interview. She moved towards the man at the end of the seat, and became aware that he had been watching her steadily from beneath the brim of his battered felt hat.

What is a coincidence? Look at it as you will, the word is unsatisfactory. And people use it to cover too much. When a novelist's plot is improbable, and its crisis is helped out by a seemingly unlikely conjunction of events, the critic smiles and murmurs, "The long arm of coincidence!" Again, when in actual life truth has proved itself stranger than fiction in some unlooked-for way, those who look on and cannot explain brush the incident aside and label it "a coincidence." But, after all, what is a coincidence? Is it mere chance when the murderer, fleeing from justice, happens to step on board that particular ship on which one of the stewards happens to have known him in the life which he is endeavouring to wipe off the slate, when perhaps in all the scores of other ships sailing from the country that day not a single person would have

known him? When Margaret Wilmore recognized those steady eyes watching her from beneath the brim of that battered felt hat, was it merely a coincidence that that man happened to be her husband, and that both he and she were sitting on the same night and at the same time on the same Embankment seat?

Never afterwards did Margaret Wilmore forget that moment of recognition. Not only does she constantly remember it; the incident comes back to her memory, not as something more or less dim, but as something vivid and real and actual, even now.

"You!" she exclaimed, shrinking back. "You! What are you doing here?"

Her husband smiled, and raised that wreck of a hat he was wearing.

"It is a beautifully fine night," he observed, "now that the shower is over. There are worse places for observing life than a seat on the Embankment. Let us put it at that. I am here for amusement."

She smiled in her turn, observing him narrowly, his clothes, his boots, his hat, his face. She could think of nothing to say. And she disliked his steady gaze. They had not seen each other for more than three years. She shrugged her shoulders.

"Why not?" he asked, lightly and naturally. "You are here for business, I for pleasure! You were always more serious, you know, than I was, if you will forgive my alluding to the past."

She made a gesture as if to say that it did not matter, that it was as well to be quite frank and open. So he smiled again, and asked her permission to smoke, drawing out from his pocket a silver cigarette-case.

"One of the relics, you see," he observed, "saved out of the wreck."

He meant to allude to his poverty, plain to anyone; but it happened that it was one

"'YOU!' SHE EXCLAIMED, SHRINKING BACK. 'YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?'"

of her gifts to him, and thus to her seemed a relic of more than material prosperity.

But she had received confirmation, if she needed it, that by some means or another this man, her husband and once her lover, had reached the gutter.

"How have you come to this?" she asked, point-blank.

She was shocked, she told herself. Moreover, his thin, aristocratic face, which she had once admired so greatly; his high, clever forehead, from which it seemed to her that his hair, never abundant, had receded since she last saw him; and the crisp little curls on his temples, now, she noticed, a little grey—all recalled to her so vividly what had once been her estimate of the man she had been proud of, which had proved so false.

After falling in love with him, marrying him, and idealizing him, she had then discovered her mistake. That was the past,

the tragedy, Legal Separation. She did not know what to think now, when she was suddenly confronted with him on a seat on the Embankment.

"How do you suppose?" he asked, in answer to her question. "What is the usual route to a seat on the Embankment at night for a man who started as I did?"

"I don't know. Perhaps you are going to blame me. Perhaps you have been speculating. Perhaps—well, perhaps a score of things!"

She shuddered as she thought of what some of those things might be.

"Do you want the whole story, stage by stage?" he asked.

She remembered that he might misunderstand her if she showed too much interest.

"No, of course not," she replied, controlling her voice. "Only it seems strange to find you here."

She was quite satisfied that all colour of emotion was absent from her words, and she was emboldened to return his gaze steadily. After all, this descent of his justified her. She felt the superiority of her position to his.

"Well, let us accept the simple explanation which you have suggested—speculation."

He said nothing more, and for a few moments there was silence.

"I am very sorry," she said, at last. "I remember you had something to do with the Stock Exchange in the past."

"Don't sympathize."

She looked at him curiously. His hand which held his cigarette was quite clean, his mouth a firm line beneath his closely-clipped moustache; his attitude was natural and self-possessed, and very far from that of a denizen of the gutter. What ought she to do?

"It is curious our meeting like this," she remarked.

"Yes; very curious indeed."

Then he seemed to realize that some effort at conversation was expected from him.

"I need not ask what *you* have been doing," he said. "You have gone on with what you once said was your mission in life, to some purpose. Your portrait has been in the picture papers several times and you have been in prison twice. You have helped your 'Votes for Women' cause pretty well, I should imagine. Come, tell me, do you think it is making good progress? Different people tell me different stories. You ought to *know*."

She answered defiantly.

"It is winning," she said. "A cause for which so much is sacrificed must win."

"I don't see the logical necessity. But it would be tedious to argue the matter out."

"Yes. You hate the cause."

"Well, I think I have some reason to dislike it. It took you from me, didn't it?"

"In some measure." She joined issue eagerly. "The truth was, however, not quite that," she urged. "You and I were mutually antipathetic. You did not understand me. The serious things of life were everything to me. You wanted to live on the surface. We couldn't go on like that. We did quite right to separate. My conscience is quite at rest. Besides, your being here proves it!"

"You mean, I would have dragged you down with me——" He paused; then added, with a movement of his hand to emphasize what he meant—"into the gutter."

"Well, you have made a mess of life. Fortunately for me, I have gone my own way. But I am sorry you have not prospered. Perhaps you don't believe it, but I'm really sorry. Life isn't easy, is it? It's a hard world to live in—even for women."

There was a touch of malicious amusement in her words. There was also something more which Wilmore saw and understood quite well.

"Margaret," he said, sharply, "do you really believe all this nonsense you are talking?"

She started at his tone of authority.

"What nonsense?" she demanded, weakly.

"This about my being in the gutter."

She gazed at him in astonished silence, and the terrible thought that he had fooled her grew upon her. She felt anger against him rising. But she was puzzled.

"What about your alimony?" he asked. "Where do you think it comes from, if I am beggared?"

"I thought that was—well, secured; you could not touch it."

"Yes, secured out of my estate. But if I have no estate, nothing but a few coppers to get my breakfast at a coffee-stall, perhaps not that, what then? Really, Margaret, I should not have thought that, with your experience of the world, you would have accepted my appearance at its face value."

His contemptuous amusement stung so that she almost got up to leave him there, as she had already left him out of her life. But not only did her curiosity chain her, but also her sense that he would command her to listen to him.

He put his hand in his pocket and showed her ten to twenty pounds in gold.

"You see, I'm not a beggar, as you imagined."

"I see I made a mistake," she admitted, coldly.

A wave of her bitter resentment against him came and again clouded her thoughts.

"If you make mistakes so easily your judgments cannot be very reliable," he observed. "But still, you can write up some sentimental rubbish about me if you like, though it wouldn't be true. You might call your first interview 'A Broken-down Gentleman—Eton, the Carlton Club, moneylenders, the Embankment, the pity of it, the waste of first-class material!' You know how to do it, don't you? It's quite easy. Colour it up well, and it's sure to take."

She sat silent, and silence fell between them. On his side there was the old contempt for her emotional, highly-coloured views of life, which were most often essentially false; on her side, the old defensive hostility against his low opinion of what she had called in the past "her public life."

Then, looking away from her, over the black void in which ran the river which, from that seat, they could not see, to the still deeper blackness of the southern bank, Wilmore began to speak, explaining his being where he was.

"As I said," he remarked, in his quiet, level tones, "I am amusing myself. One must be doing something. I come down here and mix with the dregs. I am one of them, for all they know. I pick up with an old man here, with a boy there, with some wreck of a breadwinner, still in the prime of life so far as years go, at some other time. I hang on to them, keep 'em in sight for weeks. Then one day I help, if it seems worth while. It's quite simple, only so very few have the time and leisure that I have to do it. I've got these *children* of mine scattered about all over the world. I get letters from them at my club. And sometimes I look them up. It's not charity in the ordinary sense; it's a sort of occupation I have found myself."

"I suppose you get your disappointments?"

"I AM ONE OF THEM, FOR ALL THEY KNOW."

"Not many; not ten per cent."

He lighted a cigarette, blew out a cloud of smoke, and watched it.

"You are fortunate, I should think."

"No—merely very careful. I don't set up a carpenter in life again as a bricklayer, as the societies do. I'm severely practical, and I never disclose my power to help—well, till I'm satisfied."

Margaret Wilmore found nothing to say. All she now heard was so utterly new and unexpected. She had never thought of her husband as a philanthropist, even in her wildest dreams. He had always seemed to her a clever, somewhat cynical, easy-going man of the world, and nothing more.

"How long have you been doing this?"

"Several years."

"Doesn't it get monotonous?"

"No. If it did perhaps I should drop it. You see, there's the fascination of taking these men in in the first stages. I've got to spin a yarn to them about myself. I've got to take them in and be one of them. Why, I've had experiences such as would startle most respectable citizens out of their respectable skins!"

He laughed, and the laugh seemed to die into a sigh.

Margaret remembered how good he had been in the old days in amateur theatricals. She understood how it was that few, if any, suspected him. And she began to marvel at the work he was doing.

"How many of these *children* have you?" she asked, and on the word, despite herself, her voice faltered.

"Not far short of a hundred," he told her, and she knew that in that moment she was challenged to prove that in the time since they had separated she had done as good work for the world as he had.

She made no comment, but he knew that her silence itself was just that comment which he hoped for.

An hour later Wilmore had done nothing to add to the sum total of his work, and his wife's notebook was still unopened. The latter was, indeed, forgotten.

But what was now the chief thought in Margaret Wilmore's mind was still without expression. It seemed destined to remain so. That clause in the deed of separation which Wilmore had insisted on as a *sine qua non*, which she had resisted but had been forced finally to accept, came up again now in a new light. After all, she had somewhat misjudged her husband. But she was disinclined to tell him that and very loath to admit that she had not written off the subject of that clause in her mind as she said she would at the time when it was being discussed.

Then suddenly he helped her.

"I suppose this active public life of yours has been very successful," he said, abruptly; "but has it made you *happy?*"

"What do you mean by *happy?*" she fenced.

"Well—contented."

"One does one's work, one's life is full, one does not stop to think. If one is interested and held by one's work as I am, I think, at any rate, one is satisfied."

Then he astonished her.

"Exactly," he exclaimed, turning and facing her. "Just as I thought!"

"What?"

"Your life is really empty and miserable."

"Nothing of the sort," she objected, warmly.

"Yes, it is. You drug yourself with a lot of excitement and work to keep your mind too busy to do its own thinking."

"I don't think you have any right to say that."

"But I do. Why, to some extent I'm doing the very same thing. And do you think I would tell you that I am doing it if I had not found out that you were doing it also?"

She stared at him and, unaccountably, began to tremble. Something youthful had crept into his face.

"And *you* are not happy!" she stammered.

"No. Reconciled and contented, perhaps, but not happy. And yet, to be candid, there are times when I am. But you, of course, have not that source to draw upon."

Then she leaned towards him, and the great and important thought in her mind found expression.

"Will you take me to see Jack?" she asked.

It was all the admission he wanted. It covered everything.

"He's at school, you know."

"Of course; but will you take me to see him?"

That had been the clause in the deed on which he had been adamant. His son was to be his solely. His allowance to her would be generous, other conditions might be what she pleased, but that one thing, the complete, absolute, and unqualified custody of his son, was essential.

"I will not take you to see him yet, Margaret," he said, slowly.

He was speaking now of the great treasure of his life.

"But it is term time now," he went on, "and there's more than a month to the holidays. Perhaps before then you and I can pick up something we have lost."

"Happiness?"

"Yes."

At that, woman-like, she surrendered all her defences at once, in one superb gift.

"I will try," she said, simply, and held out her hand.

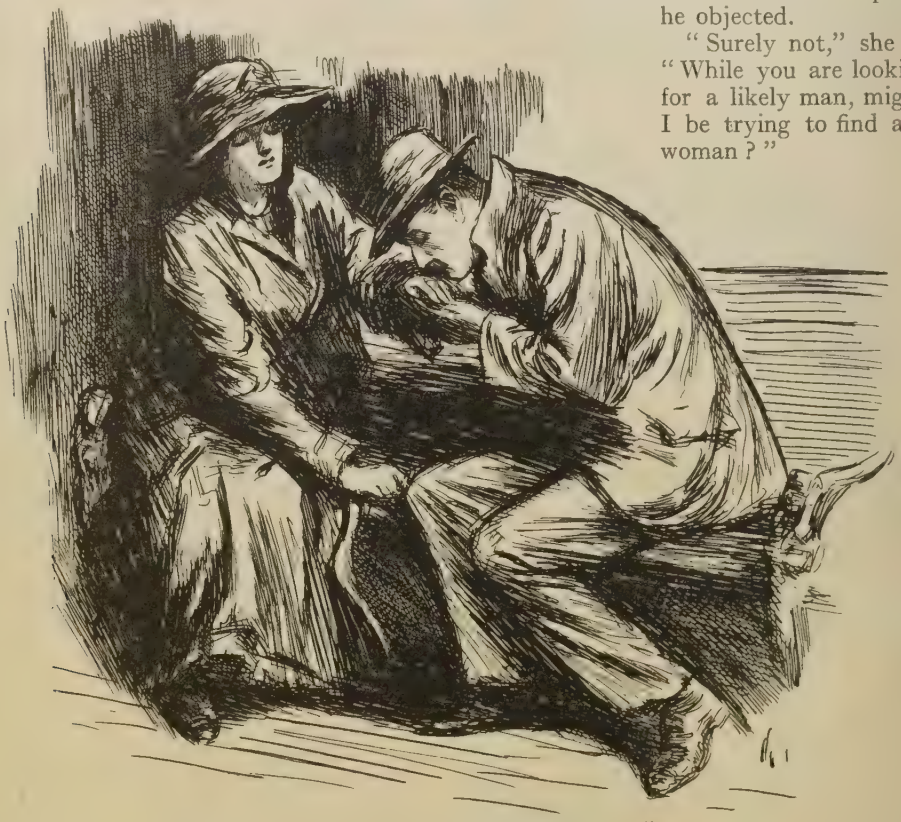
He took it and, for a moment, held it. If he was saving her, she also was saving him. An instinct of chivalry prompted him. He raised it slowly to his lips.

"Then, when we have picked it up, it will be safe to go and see Jack," he said. "He's as fine a little fellow as you could well meet."

It savours, perhaps, of a cheap effect to record how, when those two figures of destitution, Richard Wilmore and his wife, walked eastwards towards the Blackfriars coffee-stall there was dawn in the eastern sky. But the fact remains. Perhaps it was another coincidence.

They had walked some two or three hundred yards without speaking, when Wilmore stopped.

"I think I ought to tell you," he said,



"HE RAISED IT SLOWLY TO HIS LIPS."

"that I cannot leave off altogether what I am doing here. It's rather fascinating, picking up these broken men. I think I've got a taste for it now. I began it to amuse myself. But it has got deeper."

"Yes?"

"So, if you don't mind, I shall continue to come here sometimes and look out for a likely man or two."

"And shall I also keep in touch with *my* work?" she asked.

"Do you mean the demonstrating and going to prison—that sort of thing?"

She smiled, and then, still smiling, nodded. But she was not serious. She was only curious to hear what he would say. She saw quickly, however, that she had made a mistake.

"No, I don't mean that," she explained, hastily. "What I mean is that I cannot suddenly become idle. Your work is splendid. Keep on with it, Dick. Only, if you come here, I must come too."

He was puzzled.

"But that's impossible," he objected.

"Surely not," she urged. "While you are looking out for a likely man, might not I be trying to find a likely woman?"

For a full minute he did not speak. Then, realizing that, in the future, they would be working together, seeking each other's advice, comparing notes, and helping each other with their "children," he understood how it meant making that future of theirs quite safe.

"Why not?" he asked, enthusiastically. "I could show you how to do it and give you some useful hints. For instance, at the present moment your hair is much too neat and tidy. A woman in the gutter never troubles about her hair."

A PACK OF CARDS.

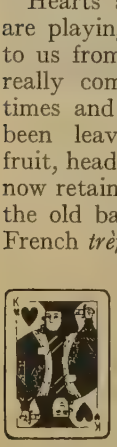
Its Stories, Legends, and Romances.

Wherever possible, the cards reproduced belong to the period of the story attached.

WHEN you sit down to a rubber of bridge, or any of the other popular games of cards, do you ever stop to reflect that every single card of the fifty-two has some definite recorded association, that each has a story of its own connected with some eminent individual or historical episode, and often not one story, but several? Suppose we attempt, with the aid of various authorities, to compile a list, not of all, but of the best of these stories, and evolve thereby gradually, and for the first time, a history of the pack of cards.

Hearts and diamonds, spades and clubs, are playing-card terms which seem to come to us from time immemorial; but they are really comparatively modern. At different times and in different countries there have been leaves, acorns, bells, cups, swords, fruit, heads, and parasols; and although we now retain the name "clubs," it is no longer the old baton which is represented, but the French *trèfle*.

THE KING OF HEARTS.



At the head of the pack, or "deck," as it was called in Shakespeare's time (and is still called in America), stands not the ace, for the ancient packs had no aces, but the "king of hearts." He was originally called the "Carolus," because the first king of hearts was a portrait "gilt and coloured" of Charles VI. of France, the unhappy monarch who, dying early in the fifteenth century, may be called the father of playing-cards in Europe. But there is another and far more interesting reason for the name "Carolus." Three and a quarter centuries later the young Pretender, "Bonnie Prince Charlie," was flying for his life in the Highlands. He was without money, and had exhausted his store of trinkets and mementoes, when a Jacobite young lady, the daughter of a poor laird, begged him to write his name on one of the cards with which he had condescended to play piquet. He readily consented. The card she produced was the king of hearts. On his leaving she begged the Prince to accept all the kings of hearts she had been able to collect from all the packs in the neighbourhood. "For, sir," said she, "you will find one of those bestowed upon your host and hostess ample guerdon, and a treasure they nor their children are likely ever to part with." Whence arose the title, "The Pretender's Visiting-card," it being said that the Prince had provided himself in France with an entire pack of cards of this denomination only.

THE QUEEN OF HEARTS.

Of "The Queen of Hearts," we are told, "she made some tarts, all on a summer's day." And Lewis Carroll has immortalized her in "Alice in Wonderland." The place of Her Majesty the Queen of Hearts was formerly filled by a knight; and it is to Italy, and not to France or England, that the glory of giving *place aux dames* must be accorded. This used to be known as "Lady Coventry's Card." Her ladyship was one of the "beautiful Gunnings" of the reign of George II. On one occasion, it is said, she visited a fortune-teller, who drew the queen of hearts three separate times out of a shuffled pack. The first time she said, "You will be rich"; the second, "You will marry a lord"; and the third time, "You will die young." The lady laughed it off; but when the first two prophecies were fulfilled, she began to entertain a dread of the queen of hearts. She fell noticeably into a decline, and the very last time she played at cards before taking to her bed turned up the queen as trump. According to one narrator, the languishing beauty murmured, "That card will kill me." She was not twenty-eight when she died. Horace Walpole says: "Poor Lady Coventry concluded her short race with the same attention to her looks. She lay constantly on her couch with a pocket-glass in her hand; and when that told her how great the change was, she took her to bed the last fortnight, had no light in her room but the lamp of a tea-kettle, and at last took things in through the curtains of her bed without suffering

them to be undrawn." Ten thousand persons went to her funeral. No wonder that when the queen of hearts was played thereafter at fashionable card "routs" there should have been some unspoken thought of the fair but fated Maria Gunning!

THE KNAVE OF HEARTS.

As for Hearty Jackanapes, otherwise the knave of hearts, he has a perennial association with knavery, other than that fanciful exploit commemorated in the famous nursery rhyme,

The Knave of Hearts he stole those tarts
And took them all away.

For it was the knave of hearts which, when seen in the sleeve of a certain Chinaman in Los Angeles, first suggested to Bret Harte the incident immortalized in his poem on the "Heathen Chinee," a "right bower" being the title of this card in the game of euchre:—

But the hands that were played
By that heathen Chinee
And the points that he made
Were quite frightful to see.
Till at last he put down a right bower
Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

To this day in many parts of the Far West the jack of hearts is known colloquially over the card-table as the "Heathen Chinee," or simply as "The Heathen."

THE TEN OF HEARTS.

The ten of hearts is associated with Lord Lauderdale, who related the incident to Croker, without, however, telling him that he himself was the hero. In February, 1773, a party had been playing at Brooks's Club, of which Fox and Lauderdale were members. Play began on a Wednesday evening at half-past five and was continued all through the night without intermission. On Thursday Lauderdale had promised to be best man at a wedding, but was obliged to send word that a substitute must be found, as, having won largely, he had pledged his honour not to rise until his opponents gave the signal. When they had been playing twenty-eight hours and only the excitement prevented a physical collapse, the luck began to turn, and Lauderdale lost. In one hour he had lost twenty thousand pounds. Soon after midnight both sides were even and it was proposed that they should rise, when Lauderdale declared that he would not waste his time for nothing. He would stake five thousand pounds that if the ten of hearts were dealt him he would take a trick with it. The wager was accepted, and fourteen rounds were played without Lauderdale once receiving the card in question. At length, when exhausted Nature would be cudgelled or cajoled no longer, the ten of hearts was dealt to him. At the fourth hand, when hearts were called for, he, having it still in his hand, revoked. The cry which burst from the others recalled him to his senses; he paid his forfeit, tore the card in two, and, without leaving the room, stretched himself on a sofa and slept until broad daylight. Such were the customs and freaks of our ancestors.

THE NINE OF HEARTS.

"Nap" is a well-known game of cards, derived, of course, from Napoleon, but the term used formerly, for some reason or other, to be applied to the nine of hearts. It is, therefore, a singular coincidence that a copy of this card bearing certain simple English words in the calligraphy of the Emperor Napoleon should be preserved in the Dresden Museum. The occasion on which the words were written once caused much speculation, and at one time they were supposed to be some form of code message to the lady, wife of an eminent ambassador, to whom the card was originally given. Afterwards it appeared that the Emperor was learning English at the time, and, believing he could dispense with the rules of grammar, had begun his studies by committing to memory a number of one-syllable words, chiefly nouns. Meeting a fair Englishwoman at a card-party, he seized the only available scrap of paper, apparently in order to demonstrate his accomplishments, or perhaps to ascertain the correct pronunciation of such words as "come," "love," "been," and "house." We are told that Napoleon's endeavours to conquer the English language were not persisted in, and that he soon gave up in disgust. This card remains a memento of his defeat.

THE EIGHT OF HEARTS.

The eight of hearts was once called "The Parenthesis." A century ago there was a

whist-party in Edinburgh, one of the players being a young married lady. The excitement over the play was very great. At a critical moment of the game it was discovered that there was a misdeal, the lady having only twelve cards. The cards were dealt again, and all seemed right until the eight of hearts was called for. Nobody had it, and it was found that the lady was a card short. A search was made forthwith for the card, when all was suddenly thrown into confusion by an interesting announcement. A physician was hastily summoned, but before his arrival a girl-child was born. Amongst those present was David Hume, who playfully dubbed the little stranger "The Parenthesis," and, according to Sir Walter Scott, it was by this title that, years afterwards, when she had grown up and become a social ornament of the Scottish capital, the lady was distinguished. Nothing further is said of the missing eight of hearts, nor is there any hint, even by the Wizard of the North, of a possible transformation of the card into a living cherub.

THE SEVEN OF HEARTS.

On November 22nd, 1774, the great Lord Clive had been playing at whist at his town house in Berkeley Square. He had just dealt the cards and turned up the trump. It was the seven of hearts. Clive is said to have paused, lifted up the card, scrutinized it calmly, put it down again, and then, begging pardon of the company, excused himself for a moment. Not returning, one of the gentlemen grew anxious, followed Clive, and found him with his throat cut, a pen-knife on the floor.

THE SIX OF HEARTS.

The six of hearts is still occasionally referred to as "Grace's Card," or the "Grace Card." How did it come by this appellation? It has nothing to do with any one of the three Graces. It appears that in 1689 one John Grace, Baron of Courtstown, one of the chief men of Kilkenny County, raised a regiment of foot and a troop of horse at his own expense for King James. One of the Duke of Schomberg's emissaries endeavoured to seduce him to the side of the Dutch usurper, but the brave Jacobite, taking a card which lay near him on the table, returned on it a spirited refusal. The card, which he sent open by the bearer of the rejected offer, was the six of hearts, and it was generally known in the city as "Grace's Card."

THE FIVE OF HEARTS.

Because on a memorable occasion he "re-negged," or revoked, with the five of hearts, the Rev. John Taylor renounced card-playing for ever. If the revoking had been simple and unaccompanied by any other circumstance it is possible this violent renunciation had never taken place. But, unhappily—we are told—the gentle bard lost his temper, denied the impeachment, and ripped out two or three full-bodied objurgations, a thing that so went against his conscience that to guard himself against a repetition he had the unlucky card framed and hung in a conspicuous place in his dwelling-room as "a perpetual reminder against the sin of losing one's self-control."

THE FOUR OF HEARTS.

In Northumberland and other parts of the North the four of hearts used to be denominated "Hob Collingwood." "By the ancient dames," writes Mr. W. P. Courtney, in his book on English Whist, "who form so large a section of card life in the provinces, it was considered an unlucky card to be found in the hand." He does not offer any explanation, but the connection is well ascertained between Hob Collingwood and the tradition of the long-missing heir to an estate, whose body was discovered months after his disappearance in a wood, his right hand clutching the four of hearts. There is a Percy ballad on the subject, in which the last verse informs us :—

O dead he lay upon the hill,
All dabbled in his gore;
Five hearts there were and all were still,
For his own did beat no more,

THE THREE OF HEARTS.

A year or two after the terrible bursting of the Mississippi Bubble in France and the South Sea Bubble in England, which involved thousands in utter ruin, it happened that Aislabie, the discredited Chancellor of the Exchequer, arrived at Venice, ignorant of the fact that in this city the fugitive French financier, Law, had previously taken up his residence. A gentleman named Warton, one of the South Sea sufferers, resolved to bring them together at his house. Thus Law and Aislabie met. After dinner cards were proposed; packs were produced by the lady of the house, and the two notorious financiers seated themselves preparatory to play. Mrs. Warton cut, when it was noticed that the cards were of an odd pattern. Aislabie cut, turned up the three of hearts, examined it carefully, ran his eye through the second pack, rose, bowed stiffly, and, without a word, left the house. When Law became aware of the cause of the Englishman's departure, he, too, found occasion for offence in the pattern of the cards, which consisted of a Dutch satire on their own financial schemes, and angrily excused himself. The lady long kept the pack, which eventually passed into the hands of a famous collector.

THE TWO OF HEARTS.

The two of hearts is traditionally associated with the invention of the game of whist. Before 1729, such games as crimp and hazard, commerce and quadrille, were the fashionable card-games. All the deuces were eliminated from the pack, which, however, consisted of fifty-two cards. It was considered vulgar to play with deuces, because an element of chance popular in the kitchen attached to them as "swabbers" or "swipers" in the game of "whisk and swabbers." The players who held a deuce were entitled to take up a share of the stake independent of the general event of the game. In other words, the deuces swept the board as a seaman "swabs" the decks. One evening at the Crown coffee-house in Bedford Row a game of whist was proposed instead of the usual quadrille. When the cards were dealt it was found that the deuce of hearts was still in the pack. "The deuce take it!" cries a player. "Nay," quoth Sir Jacob de Bouverie, "let the deuce remain. I move that all the deuces be brought back." And brought back they were. According to a modern commentator, "By this simple restoration of the four lowest cards, and the alteration of the numbers of the tricks and points which their presence necessitated, the game of whist was placed in a condition for the introduction of more scientific treatment." In a short time whist had ousted all its competitors. Perhaps to-day even bridge would be unborn if nearly two centuries ago a deuce of hearts had not at a critical moment managed to insinuate itself into a certain pack of cards.

THE ACE OF HEARTS.

Ace is a word derived from the Latin "as," a unit. At first there was no ace in the pack, but if Latimer's Card, which was sold not so long ago at Sotheby's, is a genuine relic, the ace must have been part and parcel of the pack before 1530. It appears that the great divine on more than one occasion preached a sermon on "Salvation by Christ's Cards," taking a "deck" of cards into the pulpit and illustrating his points by exhibiting the cards referred to. "Let us," he said, "play at triumph" (from which the term "trump" is derived). He went on to tell his congregation that hearts were trumps. "Here is your heart (holding up an ace); turn up your trump and cast your all on this card." Doubtless the ace was to represent the Divine Unity, which recalls the oft-told story of the sailor, who explained his motives for card-playing on the ground of piety, each card in its turn reminding him of the cardinal truths and persons of his religion, adding to ten Apostles one of the kings as Peter and

the knave as Judas. This audacious ingenuity fairly silenced his fault-finder, who left him to his "God's picture-books."

THE KING OF DIAMONDS.

Where the king of diamonds first earned its evil reputation in some countries is not known. The famous Marianne Lenormand was once besought by Joachim Murat when King of Naples to tell his fortune. He cut the cards; the king of diamonds appeared. In some—perhaps in most—fortune-telling systems this card is considered to portend the utmost ill-fortune, its sobriquet being *Le Grand Pendu*, or The Great Hanged One. Murat laid ten napoleons on the table and cut again. Again the fatal king of diamonds. He offered first fifty and then a hundred napoleons for a final chance, but Marianne angrily threw the cards at his head, bidding him begone. Murat was executed in 1815.

THE QUEEN OF DIAMONDS.

Another association of the king of diamonds together with the queen is that they were preserved by Mme. de Maintenon in her journal, which was destroyed not long after her death. The legend runs that the two cards formed part of the pack with which Louis XIV. and the celebrated widow of Scarron were playing at piquet when His Majesty proposed a secret marriage.

THE KNAVE OF DIAMONDS.

In the Hermitage at St. Petersburg may be seen two cards, the eight of diamonds and the knave (or valet) of diamonds, which are described as the cards with which Frederick the Great played in the company of Count Lacey on the eve of one of his famous battles.

THE TEN OF DIAMONDS.

The ten of diamonds is, according to several authorities, including Mr. Courtney, known in Yorkshire as "Picks." But this spelling conceals the real origin of the name. It was bestowed upon it by the notorious "monks" of Medmenham Abbey in the middle of the eighteenth century, the watchword of admission to their nocturnal orgies being "Pyx," accompanied by the production of a ten of diamonds. This card is also called "Taffy," probably a reference to its occasionally being a "Welsh honour," as the ten of trumps used to be known. It is now called the fifth honour. We will see later that the ten of another suit is "The Druid."

THE NINE OF DIAMONDS.

All the world over, wherever cards are played, the nine of diamonds is called "The Curse of Scotland." What is the origin of this phrase? The most commonly accepted explanation is that the Duke of Cumberland used the back of the nine of diamonds to indite the order for the massacre of the wounded rebels after the Battle of Culloden. But against this theory there is the evidence that the card was so called long before Culloden. Some years back a writer boldly stated that the Duke did write his order on its back, assert-

ing, moreover, that "the identical card is preserved at Slains Castle, Aberdeenshire, the seat of Lord Erroll." Inquiry of Lord Erroll proves that the card preserved there is the eight of diamonds sent by the Duke of Hamilton to the Countess of Yarmouth.

Another authority explains the term by a reference to the arms of Dalrymple, Lord Stair, which are nine lozenges on a saltire, the number and shape of the spots being identical and their arrangement sufficiently similar. Sir James Dalrymple, first Earl of Stair, was the object of much execration, especially from the adherents of the Stuarts, for his share in the Massacre of Glencoe.

Years before quite another interpretation was in vogue, and the "curse of diamonds" was held as a perversion of the "cross of Scotland," the nine of diamonds forming a cross, suggesting the cross of St. Andrews. In the Northern Highlands the name of George Campbell, a notorious freebooter, has often been applied to the nine of diamonds. Having stolen nine valuable diamonds from the crown in Edinburgh Castle, he was the cause of a heavy tax being laid on the whole country, and, as a consequence, the nine of diamonds was known as the national curse.

A further association of the nine of diamonds is of a more placid character. It is the curious example of a map of Devonshire (shown on the previous page), now pasted in Dr. James Houstoun's copy of his own "Sylva," which he used as a book-mark. Packs of this description enjoyed considerable popularity in the seventeenth century.

THE EIGHT OF DIAMONDS.

Mention has already been made of the eight of diamonds as one of the cards played by Frederick the Great and now preserved at the Russian capital, and also to an eight of diamonds still to be seen at Slains Castle. The Countess of Yarmouth, mistress of King George II., was a woman of great power and influence, whom it was dangerous to offend. On one occasion the fifth Duke of Hamilton sat down to her card-table and rose a considerable winner. Not receiving any winnings from the favourite, however, he judged it a proper moment to demand her kind offices for one of his dependents. Weeks passed, the office sought was given to somebody else, and the Duke was impelled when he was next in Lady Yarmouth's neighbourhood to send her a reminder in the form of a few words scribbled on the eight of diamonds. The fact of the card having been returned to him and presented by the wife of the sixth Duke to Lord Erroll would seem to point to the fact of the message being considered an impertinence, and it is extremely doubtful whether his Grace ever received his money or his friend the coveted boon.

THE SEVEN OF DIAMONDS.

There are several stories of cards being played on death-beds; but perhaps the best is that relating to a Mrs. Hotchkiss, of Leeds, who, like Charles II., had been "an unconscionable time a-dying"—no less than eleven years, in fact—and who, when her end came, was paralyzed in all but her faculties. During these eleven years she had been accustomed to play écarté in bed. When the end came in 1795 very suddenly she was about to play the seven of diamonds. Seeing that all was over, the attendants tried to detach the card from her hand, but it was held in the grip of death. It was proposed to cut it away, when her son interfered and said that inasmuch as it was her ruling passion, even unto death, the emblem should be buried with her. And it was. On this story being told to George Selwyn, he observed, "Ah, then, when the last trump sounds, Mrs. Hotchkiss will hold it!"

THE SIX OF DIAMONDS.

The association of card-playing and hymnody may strike many as preposterous, and yet the fact remains that the famous Toplady was an enthusiastic devotee of whist, and the first suggestion of his finest hymn was scribbled

on a playing-card—the six of diamonds. The card itself, long preserved in the family, but now in America, was inscribed across the middle with the words :—

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.
Mar. 12.

THE FIVE OF DIAMONDS.

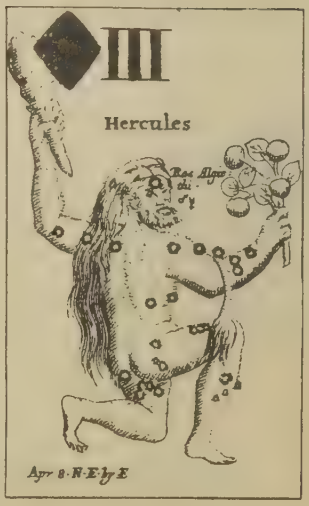
The five of diamonds has earned immortality as the card on which Charles James Fox is traditionally stated to have staked no less a sum than ten thousand pounds one night at faro at Brooks's Club. An instance has already been given of the extravagant play which raged at Brooks's, White's, and Crockford's in those days. Perhaps in this case, as Fox lost, the result was similar to that recorded on another occasion, when the brilliant young statesman's opponent remarked : " Oh, yes. I have just won a thousand guineas from Charles ; but as the bailiffs are after him I have compounded for a supper at the club."

THE FOUR OF DIAMONDS.

One evening there was a great and merry party at Charles Lamb's, at which whist was played until two in the morning—six rubbers ; the most notable fact being that at the beginning of every rubber the four of diamonds was turned up as trumps. Not only that, but the card was nearly always held in the other games by Lamb or his partner, Burney, " which was the cause of much merriment, Robinson declaring that the card had been *magnetized* by Lamb, which charge Lamb professed to receive with indignation. Everyone knew that diamonds were naturally attractive. But why the four ? "

THE THREE OF DIAMONDS.

The story runs that when James II., desiring to show his liberal mind as regards physical science, in spite of his illiberal political opinions, invited Sir Isaac Newton and Halley, the president of the Royal Society, to the palace, the company sat down to a game of comet, the cards supplied being an astronomical pack. It was a delicate attention, no doubt, to the philosophers, but hardly atoned for the monarch's subsequent discourtesy, both to the society and to the University of Cambridge. The three of diamonds was long preserved as a memento of the occasion. The comment of a later great astronomer, Herschel, to whom the card was shown, may be recorded. " Why didn't the artist make five points to his stars ? There's no use upsetting convention." Which illustrates Herschel's knowledge of playing-cards.



THE TWO OF DIAMONDS.

It was while Archbishop Cornwallis was indulging in a game of whist, for which practice he had been repeatedly reproved by George III., who disapproved of cards, and was about to play the deuce of diamonds, that he was suddenly affected by palsy in his right hand and the card in question was dashed to the floor. This was taken, in certain Methodistical circles, as a judgment of Heaven, and a caricature inscribed " The Deuce has got the Prelate " was circulated. But the archbishop ascribed his visitation to other causes, and long continued to enjoy a quiet rubber in spite of his affliction. He was once not a little put out of countenance by the naive observation of a young lady that in her part of the country (Lincolnshire) a two of diamonds was denominated " The Curse of Cornwallis."

THE ACE OF DIAMONDS.

To close the history of this suit, the remaining card has a distinctive name in Ireland. There the ace of diamonds is known as " The Earl of Cork," and the odd reason which has been given for this appellation is that it is the worst ace and the poorest card in the pack, and he is " the poorest nobleman in the country."

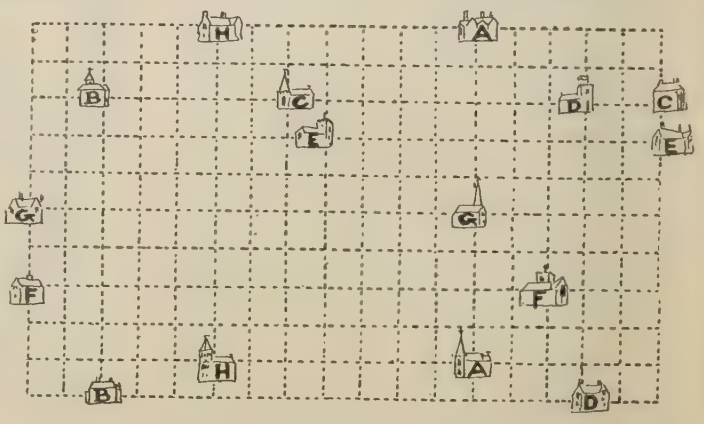
(Stories of the Clubs and Spades will be given next month.)

PERPLEXITIES.

Puzzles and Solutions. By Henry E. Dudeney.

47.—A PUZZLE FOR MOTORISTS.

EIGHT motorists drove to church one morning. Their respective houses and churches, together with the only roads available (the dotted lines), are shown. One went from his house A to his church A, another from his house B to his church B, another from C to C, and so on, but it was afterwards found that no driver ever crossed the track of another car. Take your pencil and try to trace out their various routes.



48.—THE FOUR DIGITS.

FOUR 9's may be made to represent 100 in this way: $99\frac{9}{9} = 100$. Also, with four 5's, we can write $(5 + 5) \times (5 + 5) = 100$. Which other digits may be made to represent 100 by using four of them? The correct answer is quite amusing.

49.—A PUZZLE WITH PAWNS.

PLACE two pawns in the middle of the chessboard, one at Q 4 and the other at K 5. Now, how many more pawns can you place so that no three shall be in a straight line in any possible direction?

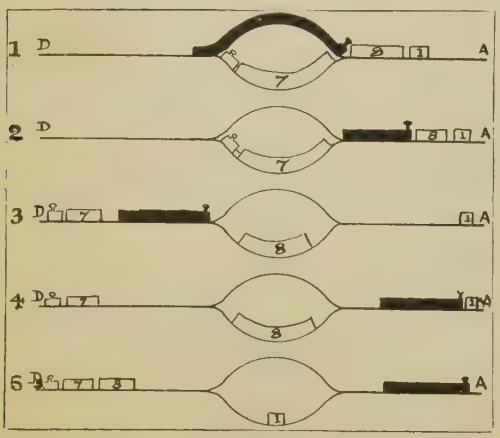
50.—A DEAL IN APPLES.

I PAID a man a shilling for some apples, but they were so small that I made him throw in two extra apples. I find that made them cost just a penny a dozen less than the first price he asked. How many apples did I get for my shilling?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

43.—A RAILWAY MUDDLE.

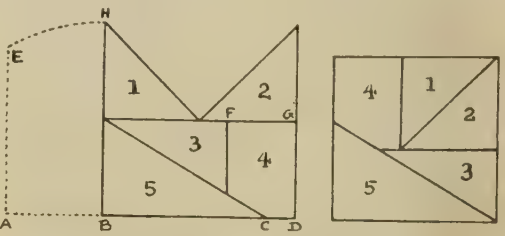
ONLY six reversals are necessary. The white train (from A to D) is divided into three sections, engine



and 7 wagons, 8 wagons, and 1 wagon. The black train (D to A) never uncouples anything throughout. Fig. 1 is original position with 8 and 1 uncoupled. The black train proceeds to position in Fig. 2 (no reversal). The engine and 7 proceed towards D and black train backs, leaves 8 on loop, and takes up position in Fig. 3 (first reversal). Black train goes to position in Fig. 4 to fetch single wagon (second reversal). Black train pushes 8 off loop and leaves single wagon there, proceeding on its journey, as in Fig. 5 (third and fourth reversals). White train now backs on to loop to pick up single car and goes right away to D (fifth and sixth reversals).

44.—A CRITICAL CHESS ENDING.

THE best play for White is to checkmate in three moves: 1 Q takes B P (ch.); Kt takes Q. 2 B takes Kt (ch.); K to Q sq. 3 Kt to K 6 (mate). If Black does not take the queen, White mates with the knight on the second move.



45.—DISSECTING A MITRE.

THE diagram shows how to cut into five pieces to form a square. The dotted lines are intended to show how to find the points C and F—the only difficulty. A B is half B D and A E is parallel to B H. With the point of the compasses at B describe the arc H E, and A E will be the distance of C from B. Then F G equals B C less A B.

46.—A PERPLEXING DISTRIBUTION.

As the number of pence, 361, has to be divided equally among a number of children, it is clear that 19 children must have received 19 pence each. That 361 children each received one penny is impossible in silver coins. Now, 19d. cannot be paid in silver except with the use of a fourpenny piece, but the affair took place "some years ago." Six children each received 5 threepenny pieces and 1 fourpenny piece; 6 children each received 4 fourpenny pieces and 1 threepenny; 6 children each received 1 sixpence, 1 fourpenny, and 3 threepenny; and 1 child received 2 sixpences, 1 fourpenny, and 1 threepenny piece. Thus, not more than 6 children received their money in exactly the same way and there were just 100 coins.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MINERAL WOMAN.

WHEN Mrs. Wilmington found Rupert asleep among the remains of the dewy crushed rose-leaves she had the sense not to disturb him, but to put two more blankets over him and to let him go on sleeping, while she wrapped herself in a shawl and spent what was left of the night on the blue sofa at the end of the four-post bed.

Uncle Charles, coming down neat and early to his study, was met by a very pale housekeeper with prim lips tightly set, who said :—

"If you please, sir, them children leave this house, or else I do. I mean *those* children."

"What have they been doing now?" asked the uncle, wearily.

"Doing their very best to murder that poor young gentleman in his very bed," said the housekeeper, looking like a thin portrait of Mrs. Siddons.

"Did they put flowers and things into the boy's food or drink?" the uncle asked, frowning.

"Worse, sir—far worse. They put him into flowers and things. And I've taken the liberty of sending for the doctor. And, please, mayn't I pack their boxes? No one's lives is safe—are, I mean." Mrs. Wilmington sniffed and got out her handkerchief.

"Please control yourself," said the uncle. "I will inquire into what you have told me, and I will see the doctor when he has seen the boy. In the meantime, kindly refrain from further fuss."

Mrs. Wilmington told the children briefly that they had nearly killed Rupert, and that they were not to think of going out and getting into any more mischief, as possibly they would not be there on the morrow. But Harriet secretly told them that Rupert was better.

The only thing to do, they felt, was to ask the doctor whether they had really done Rupert any harm. So they waylaid him in the hall.

"He's much better," said the doctor, rubbing his hands cheerfully. "Your rose-leaves were a variant of what is known as the packing treatment. You did him a world of

good. But," he added, hastily, as Uncle Charles, behind him, uttered the ghost of a grunt, "it might have been very dangerous—very. Verdict: Not guilty, but don't do it again."

And with that he laughed in a jolly, red-faced way, and went out of the front door and on to his horse and rode away.

"And *now*," said the uncle, leading the way back into the dining-room.

"I hope it won't be lines," Charles told himself. "I'd rather anything than lines."

"I hope it won't be keeping us in," thought Caroline. "I'd rather anything than be kept in. And such a fine day, too."

And still the uncle paused, till Charlotte could bear it no longer. She said, "Oh, uncle! We really didn't mean to be naughty. And it really hasn't hurt him. But we don't want to shirk. Only don't keep us suspended. Let us know the worst. Are we to be hanged for a sheep as a lamb? You know you're hanged twice if you're hanged quickly. We'll do whatever you say, and we don't mind being punished if you think we ought. Only don't do what the Wil—I mean Mrs. Wilmington—said."

"What did she say?"

"She said perhaps we shouldn't be here to-morrow. Oh!" said Charlotte, and began to cry. So did Caroline. Charles put his hands in his pockets and sniffed.

"Don't!" said the uncle, earnestly—"please don't. I certainly have no intention of punishing you for what was a mistake." But all the same he talked in a way that made them cry more. "And," he ended, "I want you to promise me that you will not only refrain from administering your remedies internally, but that you will not make any external application of them to any of your friends—or enemies," he added, hastily.

"Of course we promise," said everyone.

"Now dry your eyes," said the uncle, "and run out and play."

They went round to the terraced garden and sat on the grass and talked it all over.

"And if ever there was an angel uncle, ours is it," said Charlotte.

"Yes," said Charles; "and Rupert is better. I'm glad we did it, aren't you?"

"I suppose so. Yes. No. Yes. I don't know," said Caroline. "You see, the spell worked. That's a great thing to be sure of, anyhow."

It was the one thing, however, that they couldn't persuade Rupert to be sure of. He was certainly better, but, as he pointed out, he might have got better without the rose-leaves.

"Of course, it was jolly decent of you to get them, and all that," he said, "but the medicine the doctor gave me cured me, I expect. I don't want to be ungrateful, but what are doctors for, anyhow?"

"*I* don't know," said Charles. "But I

"THEY WAYLAID HIM IN THE HALL."

know you jolly-well tried fern-seed when you pretended to be invisible."

"I feel much older than I did then," said Rupert, biting ends of grass as he lay on the dry, crisp turf. It was the first day of his being loosed from those bonds which hamper the movements of persons who have been ill.

However, all this was now over for Rupert, and he was one of the others. His parents, by the way, had telegraphed thanking Uncle Charles very much and accepting his invitation for Rupert to spend the rest of the holidays at the Manor House. So that now there seemed to be no bar to complete enjoyment, except that one little fact that Rupert wouldn't believe in spells.

"But the fern-seed acted," said Caroline, "and the secret rose acted, and the Rosicurian rose-leaves acted."

"I don't see how you can say the fern-seed acted. I wasn't invisible, because you all saw me through the window."

"Oh, but," said Charlotte, eagerly, "don't you see? You *wanted* us to see you. You can't expect a spell to act if you don't want it to act. I wouldn't myself, if I was a spell."

"It wasn't that at all," said Caroline. "Don't you remember we chewed the fern-seed to make us see invisible things, and we saw *you?* And you *were* invisible, because you chewed fern-seed too. It came out just perfectly; only you won't see it. But let's try it again if you like—the fern-seed, I mean."

But Rupert wouldn't. He preferred to read "The Dog Crusoe," lying on his front upon the grass. The others also got books.

Next day Rupert felt more alive, as he explained.

"Now, look here," he said at breakfast, "suppose we go and discover the North Pole?"

"That *would* be nice," said Caroline. "The attics? We've never explored them yet."

"No; attics are for wet days," said Rupert.

"Not the real North Pole, you don't mean?" said Charles, quite ready to believe that Rupert might mean anything, however wonderful and adventurous.

"No," said Rupert. "What I thought of was a *via medias res*."

"Latin," explained Charles to the girls.

"It means a middle way. You ask your uncle to let us take our lunch out; bread and cheese and cake will do. And to not expect us till tea-time, and perhaps not then. We'll just go where we think we will, and shut our eyes when we pass sign-posts and post-offices. We might get lost, you know; but I'd take care of you."

"We mustn't disturb the uncle," Caroline reminded them. "We promised. Not for a week."

"Write him a letter," said Rupert.

And this is the letter they wrote—at least, Caroline wrote it, and they all signed their names:—

"DEAREST UNCLE," ("'Dearest' is rot," said Charles, looking at Rupert to be sure that he thought so too. "Put 'Dear.'" "But 'Dear' is rottener," answered Caroline, going on; "it's what you say to the butcher when you write about the ribs that ought to have been Sir something. *I* know.") "Please may we go out for the day and take our lunch bread and cheese and cake would do Rupert says he will take care of us and not expect us home till tea and perhaps not then with love

"CAROLINE
"CHARLOTTE
"CHARLES."

"Rupert can't sign because he's 'he' in the letter. Only the 'we's' can sign," said Caroline.

And Harriet took the letter to the uncle, and the uncle wrote back:—

"By all means. I am sure you will remember not to administer spells internally or externally to anyone you may meet. Be home by half-past six. If anything should detain you, send a telegram. I enclose half a crown for incidental expenses.—Your Dearest Uncle."

"How sweet of him!" the girls agreed, and Charles wanted to know what sort of expenses he meant.

"Incidental? Oh, if you want an apple or some chocs in a hurry, and don't happen to have any chink on you," Rupert explained. "Or ginger beer. Or raw eggs to suck as you go along. They're very sustaining when all other food's despaired of."

The uncle must have given orders, for Harriet soon brought in four neat brown-paper parcels.

"Your lunches," she said. "Hope you'll enjoy yourselves. You've got a nice day for your outing. Bring me a keepsake, won't you, from wherever it is you're going to?"

"Of course we will," said Charlotte. "What would you like?"

But Harriet laughed, and said she was only talking.

They put on their thinnest clothes, for it was a very hot day, and they got William to cut them ash-sticks. "In case we want to

be pilgrims with staffs," said Charles. The girls were very anxious for Rupert to wear his school blazer; and so flattering were their opinions of it, and of him, and of it on him, and of him in it, that he consented. Charles wore *his* school blazer, and the girls' frocks were of blue muslin, and they had their soft white muslin hats, so they looked very bright and yet very cool as they started off down the drive with their ash-sticks over their shoulders and their brown-paper parcels in knotted handkerchiefs dangling from the ends of the sticks.

"Who shall we be?" Charlotte asked, as they passed into the shadow of the woods where the road runs through to the lodge gate.

"I'll be Nansen," said Charles. "I wish we had some Equismo dogs and a sledge."

"It's Eskimo," said Rupert.

"I know it is," said Charles.

"I don't believe you did," said Rupert; and Charles turned red and the girls looked at each other uncomfortably.

"I didn't say I did," Charles answered. "Not when I said it first. I meant I know now you've told me. It looked like Equismo in the books."

This was disarming. Rupert could do no less than thump Charles on the back and say, "Sorry, old man," and Caroline hastened to say, "What will *you* be, Rupert?"

"Why, Rupert, of course. Prince Rupert. He invented Prince Rupert drops, that are glass and crumble to powder if you look at them too hard. And he fought at Naseby—Rupert of the Rhine, you know. 'For Charles, King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!' he shouted."

"Oh, I say," Charles urged, "do let me be Charles if you're Rupert. It's only fair."

"You can't keep changing," said Rupert. "Besides, Charles had his head chopped off afterwards."

"Well, Rupert died too, if you come to that. You might, Rupert."

And the girls said, "Do let him," so Rupert said, "All right, I don't mind."

Charlotte said she would be Joan of Arc, and Caroline chose Boadicea.

"She was British, you see," Caroline explained, "and Aunt Emmeline says you ought to support home industries."

"Now we all call each other by our play-names all day," Charlotte said, "and if you make a mistake you lose a mark."

"Who keeps the marks?"

"You keep your own, of course. Counting on your fingers; and if you did it ten times you'd tie a knot in your handkerchief. Aunts do it ten times if they play often. *We* don't."

Here Boadicea, Joan of Arc, Prince Rupert, and King Charles turned out of the lodge gate, and the exploring expedition began at seventeen minutes past ten precisely. The three C.'s kept up the game, calling each other by the new names with frequency and accurateness, but Rupert grew more and more silent, and when Charlotte addressed him as Prince Rupert, the stainless knight, he told her not to be silly.

At a quarter past twelve the four children, very dusty, very hot, and rather tired, reached a level crossing. The gates were shut because a train was coming, and already, as you looked along the line, you could see the front of the engine getting bigger and blacker, and the steam from it getting whiter and puffier, and you could feel the vibration of its coming in the shuddering of the gate you leaned on.

The train stopped, in a snorting, panting hurry, at the little station just beside the gates, let out a few passengers, shook itself impatiently, screamed, and went on. The big gates across the road swung slowly back till they stretched across the railway, and the people who had got out of the train came down the sloping end of the platform and through the small swing-gates, and the four children, who were crossing the line, met the little crowd from the train half-way. There were two women with baskets, a man with a bandy-legged dog, and a girl with a large band-box partly hidden by brown paper, and—the four children were face to face with him before they knew that there was anyone coming from that train whom they had rather not be face to face with—the Murdstone man himself. He was not a yard from them. Rupert threw up his head and backed a little as if he expected to be hit. The three C.'s breathed a deep concerted "Oh!" and trembled on the edge of what might be going to happen. No one knew what Mr. Murdstone's power might be. Could he seize on Rupert and take him away? Could he call the police? Anything seemed possible in that terrible instant when they were confronted, suddenly and beyond hope of retreat, with the hated master.

And nothing happened at all. The Murdstone man passed by. He gave a cold, sour, unrecognizing glance at the three C.'s, but he never looked at Rupert. He looked over his head as though Rupert had not been there, and passed on.

Rupert grew very red and said nothing. The girls looked at each other.

"Let's walk along by the river," said Caroline, "and then we'll tell you why he didn't look at you."

"You'll tell me now," said Rupert, firmly, "or I won't go another step."

"He didn't look at you," said Charlotte, "because he didn't see you. And he didn't see you because you were invisible just when you wanted to be."

"I didn't want to be," said Rupert. "At least—— Oh, well, come on."

When they had reached a green meadow that sloped pleasantly to the willow-fringed edge of the River Medway Charlotte said:—

"You *were* invisible to him. That's the magic. Perhaps you'll believe in spells now."

"But there wasn't any spell," said Rupert, impatiently. And the girls said, with one voice, "You take off your blazer and see!"

"I hate hanky-panky," said Rupert, but he took off his coat.

"Look, in there," said Caroline, turning back that loose fold which the buttonholes are made in. "*Fern-seed!* Char and I seccotined it on while you and Charles were washing your hands. We meant to ask you to wish to be invisible when we went into a shop or something, just to prove about spells, but you did it without our asking. And now you *will* believe, won't you?"

"I *can't*," said Rupert. "Don't talk about it any more. Let's have the grub out."

They opened the parcels and "had the grub out," and it was sandwiches, and jam tarts packed face to face, and raspberries in a cardboard box that had once held chocolates—that was in Rupert's parcel—and biscuits and large wedges of that pleasant, solid cake which you still get sometimes in old-fashioned houses where baking-powder and self-raising flour are unknown.

"THE MURDSTONE MAN PASSED BY."

"This is the first picnic we've ever had by ourselves. Don't you like it, Prince Rupert?"

Rupert's mouth was full of sandwich. He was understood to say that it was "all right."

"King Charles is gracefully pleased to like

it," said Charles. "Boadicea had better pour out the Rhine wine, for it's a thirsty day."

"Oh!" said Boadicea, in stricken tones. "There isn't any!"

And there wasn't. Not a drop of milk or water or ginger-beer or anything drinkable. No nephew or niece of Aunt Emmeline's was likely to do anything so rash as drinking water from a strange river to which it had not been properly introduced, so there was nothing to be done but to eat the raspberries and pretend that raspberries quenched thirst—which, as you probably know too well, they don't.

This was why, when they had eaten everything there was to eat, and buried the bits of paper deeply in a hollow tree so as not to spoil the pretty picture of grey-green willows and blue-green water and grass-green grass, they set out to find a cottage where ginger-beer was sold. There was such a cottage, and they had passed it on the way. It had a neat, gay little garden, and a yellow rose clambering over its porch, and on one of its red-brick sides was a pear tree that went up the wall with level branches like a double ladder, and on the other a deep blue iron plate which said in plain white words, "Batey's Minerals." A stranger from Queen Victoria's early days might have supposed this to mean that the cottage had a small museum of geological specimens, such as you find now and then in Derbyshire, but Rupert and the three C.'s knew that "Minerals" was just short for ginger-beer and the other things that fizz.

So, after making sure that they had not lost their two shillings and sixpence, they unlatched the white gate and went in.

The front door, which was green and had no knocker, was open, and one could see straight into the cottage's front parlour. It was very neat and oilclothy, with sea-shells on pink wool mats and curly glass vases and a loud, green-faced clock on the mantelpiece. There was a horsehair sofa and more white crochet antimacassars than you would have thought possible, even in the most respectable seaside lodgings. A black and white cat was asleep in the sun, hedged in among the pots of geraniums that filled the window. In fact, it was a very clean example of the cottage homes of England, how beautiful they stand!

The thirsty children waited politely as long as they could bear to wait, and then Caroline tip-toed across the speckless brown-and-blue linoleum and tapped at the inner door. Nothing happened. So she pushed the door, which was ajar, a little more open and looked through it. Then she turned, shook her head, made a baffling sign to the others to stay where they were, and went through the door and shut it after her.

The others waited; the sign Caroline had made was a secret only used in really serious emergencies.

"I expect there's a bird in there and she wants to catch it," said Charles, but the others could not believe this, and they were right.

Quite soon Caroline returned, bearing a wrinkled black tray with three bottles of lemonade, three glasses, and a little round wooden thing that you press the glass marble down with into the neck of the bottle.

"Here," she said in a hurry, "you go round to the other side of the cottage, and there's a hornbeam arbour and a bench and a table, and you're very welcome to sit there. I'll tell you all about it afterwards," she added, whispering. "Only *do* take it and go."

"But what *is* it?" Rupert asked.

"She's crying dreadfully. I don't know what it is yet. Oh, *do go!*"

And she thrust the tray on him and went back through the door with an air of importance which even the other C.'s found just a little trying. However, they were thirsty and loyal, so they did as they were asked to do; found the hornbeam arbour, and settled down on the blue-painted benches to drink their lemonade and tell each other how thirsty they had been, drawing deep breaths between the draughts to say so with.

Caroline, in the meantime, was in the back kitchen of the strange cottage, gently patting the shoulder of a perfect stranger who sat with her elbows on the mangle and her head in her hands, crying, crying, crying.

"Don't! Oh, please don't!" said Caroline, again and again; and again and again the woman who was crying said, "Go away. I can't attend to you. Go away!"

She was a middle-aged woman, and her dark hair, streaked with grey, was screwed up behind in a tight knob. Her sleeves were tucked up, and all round her were piles of those square boxes with wooden divisions in which lemonade and ginger-beer travel about. The boxes were dotted with greeny bottles, some full, some empty, and the boxes were everywhere—on the sink, under the sink, on the copper, on the bricks, and outside the open back door.

"Don't cry," said Caroline, in a voice that would have soothed an angry bear. "*Do* tell me what's the matter. I might be able to help you."

"Oh, go along, do," said the woman, trying

"THEY SETTLED DOWN ON THE BLUE-PAINTED BENCHES TO DRINK THEIR LEMONADE."

to dry her eyes with the corner of a blue-checked apron. "You seem a kind little gel, but it ain't no good. Run along, dearie."

"But," said Caroline, "if you don't stop crying, how am I going to pay you for the lemonade I took when you said I might? Three bottles it was."

"Sixpence," said the woman, sniffing.

"You poor dear," said Caroline, and put her arms round the woman's neck. "Now," she said, comfortably, "you just fancy I'm your own little girl and tell me what's the matter."

The woman turned her face and kissed Caroline.

"Bless you for a silly little duck," she said. "My own little gel's in service over Tonbridge way. It's silly of me taking on like that. But it come so sudden."

"What did?" Caroline asked. "Do tell me. Perhaps I can help. I've got an uncle, and I know he'd give me some money for you, if that's it. And, besides, I can make nice things happen sometimes. I really can."

"It isn't money," said the woman, drearily, "and I don't know why I should tell you."

"It eases the heart, you know," said Caroline; "my aunt says it does. Do tell me. I'm *so* sorry you're unhappy."

"You wouldn't understand," said the woman, drying her eyes. "It's silly, I know. But I only heard this morning, and just now it all come over me when I was sorting out the bottles. I was born in the little house, you see, and lived here all my life. And now to leave! A week's notice, too! Where'm I to go to? How'm I to manage? What'm I to get my living by? You see, being right on the high road I get all the thirsty customers as they comes by. Where'm I to go to? There's a cottage back by Wright's farm; ne'er a bit of garden to it, and nobody passes it one year's end to another. I'd never sell a single bottle if I lived there to be a hundred."

"But why must you leave here?" Caroline asked.

"Gentlefolks," said the woman, bitterly; "got a grand 'ouse of their own up in London. But they gone and took a fancy to my little bit, cause it looks so pretty with the flowers I planted, and the arbour my father made, and the roses as comes from mother's brother in Cambridgeshire.

"'Such a sweet, pretty cottage to stay in for week-ends,' they says; an' *I* may go to the Union and stay there, week in, week out, and much they care. There's something like it in the Bible, only there ain't no prophets now like there was of old to go and rebuke the folks that takes away poor folks' vineyards and lambs and things to make week-end cottages of. And, of course, they can pay for their fancy. An' it comes a bit 'ard, my dear. An' that's all. So now you know."

"But that's dreadful," said Caroline; "the landlord must be a very wicked man."

"It ain't '*is* doing," said the woman, sorting bottles swiftly; "'e's but a lad when all's said and done. Comes of age in a week or two. Ain't never been 'is own master yet, so to say. It's 'is cousin as manages the property. 'E's got it into 'is 'ead to screw another shilling or two out of us somehow; 'ere, there, and everywhere, as they say. To pay for the harches and the flags when milord comes of age, I suppose. Now you see you can't do anything, so run along, lovey. You're a good little gel to trouble about it, and you're the only one as has. It'll come home to you all right, never fear. Kind words is never lost, nor acts neither. Good day to you, missy."

"Good-bye," said Caroline; "but I'm not so sure that I can't do anything. I'll ask my uncle. Perhaps he knows my lord, whoever it is."

"Andor," said the woman; "but nobody don't know him about here. He's been abroad for his education, being weak in the chest from a child. But it ain't no good, dearie. I'll 'ave to go, same as other folks 'as 'ad to go afore me."

"I shall think of something, you see if I don't," said Caroline. "I've got an aunt as well as an uncle, and she says you can make things happen. You just keep on saying, 'Everything's going to be all right. I'm not going to worry.' And then everything *will* be all right. You'll see. And I'll come again to-morrow or next day. Good-bye, dear."

She kissed the woman, paid the sixpence, and went out to the hornbeam arbour with the air of one who has a mission.

"Come on," she said, "I'll tell you as we go along. No, I'm not thirsty now. Oh, well, if you've saved some for me. That was jolly decent of you." She drank. "Now," she said, "there's not a moment to be lost; it's a matter of life and death to the mineral woman. Come on."

And as they went back along the dusty road she told them what had happened.

"I must ask the uncle *at once* if he knows Lord Andor," she said; "and he can telegraph to him like he did to India, and then everything will be all right."

"But," said Charlotte, "we promised we wouldn't disturb him *for anything*. Suppose he doesn't appear at tea?"

"Then we must do something else," said Caroline. "It's the realest thing I've ever had the chance of doing, except you, Rupert," she added, politely; "and if we can't get at the uncle we'll try a spell. Every single spell we've tried has come right. First the fern-seed; then the——"

"Yes, I know," said Rupert, hastily, "and it's all right to play at. But this is a real thing. I've got a godfather that's a baronet. I'll write to him to go to the House of Lords and tell this Lord Andor. How's that?"

"Yes, do," said Charlotte; "but we'll work the spell as well. We may as well have two strings to our harp, like that blind girl in the picture. What spell can we do?"

"We'll look it up in the books," Caroline said, importantly; "and, Rupert, if we pull it off and she doesn't get turned out of her house, you will believe the spell, won't you?"

"I'll try," said Rupert, cautiously; "and, anyway, I'll write to my godfather. Only he's in Norway. I'd better telegraph, perhaps?"

"It'll cost pounds, won't it?" said Charles, admiringly.

"Never mind," said Rupert, carelessly. "Mrs. Wilmington will lend me the chink till I get my allowance. Let's do the thing properly while we're about it. You may as well be hanged for a sheep as——"

"As a cow. Yes, indeed," said Charlotte, with approval.

(To be continued.)

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A ZOO TRAGEDY.

HERE is a snapshot of the hippopotamus and keeper at the Alipore Zoo, taken shortly before the man was killed by the animal. Budhu Chamar, the keeper, was in the habit of irritating the animal, in order to make it open its capacious mouth for the inspection of visitors. The man may be noticed holding one of the teeth, and the hippo is endeavouring to get rid of him. One day, however, Budhu played with edged tools once too often, and the animal attacked and killed him.—Mr. H. Cowley, 5, Hartford Lane, Calcutta.

ALFRESCO HOT BATHS.

THIS novel form of bathing is in vogue at the mountain-spa of Noboribetsu, in the Island of Yezo, Japan. The steaming hot water is conveyed in bamboo pipes direct from an old volcano, the wall of whose crater has been broken down on the side next the village, so that in a few minutes one can pass from the little collection of wood-and-paper huts into an inferno of boiling springs, geysers, and solfataras. The police regulation against promiscuous bathing of the sexes is not very rigidly observed in these remote districts, and the advent of one of the representatives of the law is heralded by a rush for the usually discarded garments.—Mr. Lumen Holme, Yokohama, Japan.

A HIGHWAYMAN'S CLEVER RUSE.

I THINK your readers will be interested in these two photographs of stage robberies which occurred on the road to Yosemite Valley, California. At the time of the first one, in August, 1905, one of the passengers, endowed with great presence of mind, asked the highwayman if he would allow his picture to be taken. Doubtless possessing great nerve, he replied in the affirmative. He took care, though, to make the passengers turn away from him and hold their hands behind their backs. The following year, when the stage was again held up, this incident was remembered by one of the tourists, who obtained the second picture of the bandit. After each robbery he was tracked by his footprints for a considerable distance, but each time they led to a grain-field and then disappeared. Some two years later there was found under a tree in that locality a rude wooden contrivance which could be fastened to the bottom of one's shoe. The forepart was carved to imitate a horseshoe, and on the rear was fastened a sardine-tin. This explained the disappearance of the footprints in the grain-field.—Mr. P. E. Otey, c/o Western Metropolis National Bank, San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

A PORTRAIT DRAWN BY DOTS.

YOU recently published in THE STRAND MAGAZINE a portrait of a lady drawn in one continuous line. I now venture to send you a *no*-line, or dot, portrait, or it may be called a "half-tone" picture drawn by hand. I may add that, although the result is not quite so clear as in the one-line picture, it requires a very great deal of patience and perseverance to produce a picture in this way at all.—Mr. R. J. Brothers, Woodcote, Ashford, Kent.

BARNACLES, NOT ICICLES.

I THINK one may safely say that nine out of ten people would never guess what the following photograph represents. It shows the bottom of a steamer covered with an extraordinary growth of barnacles, which looked like so many hundred icicles, the average length of them being fourteen inches. This growth was the result of three months' enforced idleness in Port Said Harbour.—Mr. L. J. Edwards, Third Officer, P. and O. ss. *Malta*.

THE "BUTTON KING."

THE accompanying photograph shows the suit I wore as the Button King at a fancy-dress skating carnival at the Finsbury Park Rink a few months ago. The number of buttons used to decorate the suit was 17,983, and their cost 22s. 6d., while the weight of the whole was seventeen pounds. As may be imagined, the task of sewing on the buttons was no light one, and occupied 273 hours.—Mr. A. H. Woods, 16, Sheen Grove, Richmond Road, Barnsbury, N.

A STORK'S WONDERFUL FLIGHT.

I AM sending you a photograph of the ringed leg of a stork which I picked up dead on December 31st, 1910, at the farm of Chief Dalinyebo, near the Bashee River. On reading the inscription on the ring, I wrote to the headquarters of the Ornithological Society, Budapest, and received from the director, Mr. Otto Herman, the following information: "Stork bearing ring No. 1938 was tagged as an unfledged young on June 26th, 1910, at Bellye, a place at the confluence of the rivers Drave and Danube." This proves the bird to have arrived at the flying stage and reached South Africa—a distance of over five thousand miles—in six months. Photograph by Mr. G. W. Straton, of Umbata.—Mr. E. T. Ball, Tonli Sawmills, South Africa.

AN UNSOLVED RIDDLE.

SEVERAL years ago I came across this unsolved riddle. It is supposed to have been invented by a bishop, who, unfortunately, died before giving the answer. Possibly some of THE STRAND readers may discover the solution:—

"I'm the sweetest of voices in orchestra heard,
And yet in an orchestra never have been;
I'm a bird of bright plumage, and less like a bird
Nothing in Nature has ever been seen.
Touching earth I expire, in water I die,
In air I lose life—yet I swim and I fly.
Darkness destroys me and light is my death;
You can't keep me alive but by stopping my breath.
If my name can't be guessed by a boy or a man,
By a girl or a woman it certainly can!"

—Miss E. M. Leadman, 4, Kent Bank Road, Buxton.

BATS FOR FIGHTING MOSQUITOES.

THE annexed picture is that of a new hygiostatic guano-producing bat roost at San Antonio, Texas. Experiments are being carried on near that city with this structure with at least two objects in view. The first is to cultivate the common brown bat in sufficient numbers that will rid the whole surrounding area of mosquitoes, the common food of the bat. This incidentally will prevent malarial infection in the section. The second object is to sell the great amount of guano produced by the bats on a commercial scale, the same as that mined from large bat-caves in certain other districts. The structure is built on a plan of imitating the natural habitats of the bats as far as possible, the chief similarity being that of complete darkness. The structure is thirty feet high, twenty feet square at the base, and fifteen feet at the top, elevated about ten feet off the ground on posts. The posts are supplied with metal shields to guard against rats. On one side is a series of slats, so arranged that the bats may have easy access to the roosts without allowing light to enter the inner apartment of the building. Roosts are placed inside for the convenience of the bats, on which they sleep during the daytime. Bats being small, the capacity of this structure is about two million bats, a number sufficient to keep a vast area free from mosquitoes and to produce a profitable amount of guano to the owner. —Mr. Rowland M. Meade, Washington, D.C.

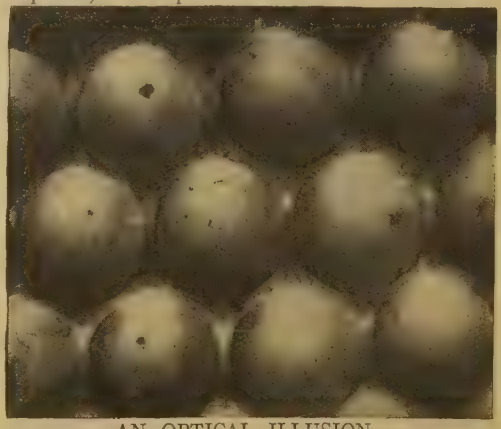
AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT.

A NOVEL method of demonstrating the pressure of the atmosphere is here shown. On the flat of the iron is laid a thin sheet of rubber—part of an old tobacco pouch will do. A small tin lid containing some wadding soaked in spirits of wine is placed on the rubber and the spirit is ignited. The wineglass is then pressed down tightly over the flame. When the flame dies out it will be found that the two articles are firmly united, and may be suspended by a wire as shown, and some time elapses before they separate. The explanation is that the flame consumes the oxygen in the glass and lowers the pressure, when the greater pressure of the atmosphere squeezes the two articles together.—Mr. Chas. Seymour, 12, York Street, Rugby.

A FLYING-FISH'S RECORD LEAP.

"LAT. 19·38 N., long. 63·15 W., 9 p.m., Feb. 8, from Phila to Martinique, W.I." After working out the above position I was walking towards the captain on the upper bridge to acquaint him with the result obtained, when I was struck by some object on the right eyebrow which cut the skin

and drew blood and momentarily stunned me. The night being very dark we obtained a light, and found the flying-fish shown in the above photo. It measured eleven and a half inches and weighed sixteen ounces. Surely this is a record for a flying-fish's leap, as our bridge deck is twenty-four feet from the water-line, so that the fish must have leaped nearly thirty feet high and come inboard about ten feet from the wing of the bridge.—Mr. T. C. Evans, second officer ss. *Semantha*, of Liverpool, care of Earn Steamship Line, Philadelphia.



AN OPTICAL ILLUSION.

ONE of the difficulties photographers have to contend with is that of picturing dents or cavities in objects. As a general rule such markings have the appearance of projecting outward instead of being concave. The illusion is seen in the accompanying photograph, which represents a tin tea-tray ornamented with a series of concave impressions. By holding at certain angles, and looking at it steadily for some time, the proper concave effect may sometimes be seen. When the photographer is successful in getting, by suitable lighting, a true concave effect, the opposite effect may be obtained by looking at the picture upside down.—Mr. Percy R. Salmon, 115, Minard Road, Catford, S.E.

MAKING SURE OF THE ADDRESS.

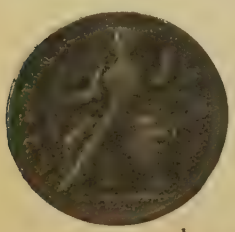
I SEND you a rather good postal curiosity, which arrived safely at Hendon a day or two after Mr. Grahame-White's flight to Birmingham. It was sent by an inmate of the Aston Workhouse, who mentione in his letter how much he appreciated Mr. Grahame-White's work in connection with aviation, and that, owing to poverty, the stamp on the envelope was all that he could afford as a gift of appreciation.—Mr. J. C. Savage, The London Aerodrome, Hendon, N.W.

AN EGG-STRAORDINARY THING.

THIS curious egg was recently laid by one of my Black Leghorn hens. As will be seen, it is a double egg, and I have pencilled on each, making the small egg a man's head and the larger his bust. —Mr. Geo. Hagan, Nursery Cottage, Rice Lane, Egremont, Cheshire.

CAN YOU FIND THE RAT?

READERS of THE STRAND will recall the old puzzle of the elephant's head on the Victorian shilling. Here is another of the same nature. Can you find the rat on this old Georgian halfpenny? It would be interesting to know if this was intentional, as the House of Hanover and its followers were nicknamed Hanoverian Rats by the Jacobites. On close inspection the rat may be seen on the right knee of Britannia, complete with eyes and ears (1). It is formed from the folds of her robe, and is not to be seen so clearly in the newly-minted coin (2), but as the design wears down the rat appears, and the more worn the coin the clearer the rat becomes. The rat is shown enlarged in the third illustration. — Mr. C. Van Noorden, 35, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.



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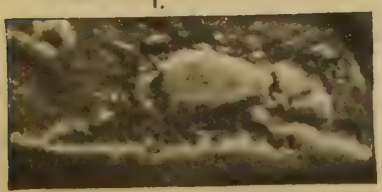

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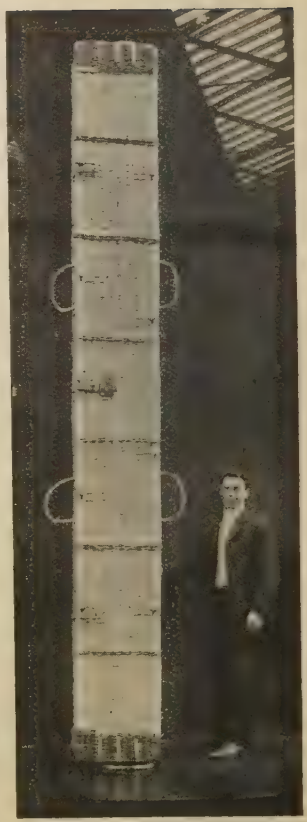

THE WORLD'S LARGEST BASKET.

THIS is, we know, an age of big things, but surely nothing bigger of its kind has ever been seen than this monster basket, which was made by Messrs. T. Craven and Sons, of Corporation Street, Manchester, for the Merzer Golem troupe of acrobats. An idea of its great length may be formed from the man standing beside it, who is over six feet in height.

SOLUTION OF LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE.

+ 5/-.

READERS were asked to remove the above, put nothing in its place, and leave a well-known quotation behind. The following is the solution: "No cross, no crown."

FOR BRIDGE PLAYERS.

THE bridge problem which appeared in our April number seems to have puzzled many readers, in spite of the condensed solution which we gave in May. The problem did not profess to be a new one. On the contrary, it is a kind of classic, and is by many players considered to be the best ever invented. It is, of course, though difficult, perfectly sound. We now publish a fuller solution, in which A and B make the best defence possible. If at Trick 2 B discards a club instead of a diamond, thereafter the words "clubs" and "diamonds" must be interchanged, and Y and Z make their tricks as before.

(1). Z, 2 spades; A, king spades; Y, 2 hearts; B, 9 spades.
(2). Y, 3 hearts; B, 10 diamonds; Z, 2 diamonds; A, 8 diamonds.
(3). Y, 4 diamonds; B, queen diamonds; Z, ace diamonds; A, 9 diamonds.
(4). Z, ace spades; A, knave diamonds; Y, 3 clubs; B, 10 spades.
(5). Z, 3 spades; A, 9 clubs; Y, 4 hearts; B, knave spades.
(6). Y, 5 hearts; B, 10 clubs; Z, 4 spades; A, knave clubs.
(7). Y, 4 clubs; B, queen clubs; Z, ace clubs; A, king clubs.
(8). Z, 2 clubs: A, king diamonds; Y, 3 diamonds; B, queen spades.

"HE FINALLY TORE FROM HIS INNER POCKET A BULKY LEATHER NOTE-BOOK."

(*See page* 127.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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One Crowded Hour.

By ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

Illustrated by H. M. Brock, R.I.

THE place was the Eastbourne-Tunbridge road, not very far from the Cross in Hand—a lonely stretch, with a heath running upon either side. The time was half-past eleven upon a Sunday night in the late summer. A motor was passing slowly down the road.

It was a long, lean Rolls-Royce, running smoothly with a gentle purring of the engine. Through the two vivid circles cast by the electric head-lights the waving grass fringes and clumps of heather streamed swiftly like some golden cinematograph, leaving a blacker darkness behind and around them. One ruby-red spot shone upon the road, but no number-plate was visible within the dim ruddy halo of the tail-lamp which cast it. The car was open and of a tourist type, but even in that obscure light, for the night was moonless, an observer could hardly fail to have noticed a curious indefiniteness in its lines. As it slid into and across the broad stream of light from an open cottage door the reason could be seen. The body was hung with a singular loose arrangement of brown holland. Even the long black bonnet was banded with some close-drawn drapery.

The solitary man who drove this curious car was broad and burly. He sat hunched up over his steering-wheel, with the brim of a Tyrolean hat drawn down over his eyes. The red end of a cigarette smouldered under the black shadow thrown by the headgear. A dark ulster of some frieze-like material was turned up in the collar until it covered his ears. His neck was pushed forward from his rounded shoulders, and he seemed, as the car now slid noiselessly down the long, sloping road, with the clutch disengaged and the engine running free, to be peering ahead of

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him through the darkness in search of some eagerly-expected object.

The distant toot of a motor-horn came faintly from some point far to the south of him. On such a night, at such a place, all traffic must be from south to north when the current of London week-enders sweeps back from the watering-place to the capital—from pleasure to duty. The man sat straight and listened intently. Yes, there it was again, and certainly to the south of him. His face was over the wheel and his eyes strained through the darkness. Then suddenly he spat out his cigarette and gave a sharp intake of the breath. Far away down the road two little yellow points had rounded a curve. They vanished into a dip, shot upwards once more, and then vanished again. The inert man in the draped car woke suddenly into intense life. From his pocket he pulled a mask of dark cloth, which he fastened securely across his face, adjusting it carefully that his sight might be unimpeded. For an instant he uncovered an acetylene hand-lantern, took a hasty glance at his own preparations, and laid it beside a Mauser pistol upon the seat alongside him. Then, twitching his hat down lower than ever, he released his clutch and slid downward his gear-lever. With a chuckle and shudder the long, black machine sprang forward, and shot with a soft sigh from her powerful engines down the sloping gradient. The driver stooped and switched off his electric head-lights. Only a dim grey swathe cut through the black heath indicated the line of his road. From in front there came presently a confused puffing and rattling and clanging as the oncoming car breasted the slope. It coughed and spluttered on a powerful, old-fashioned low gear, while its engine throbbed like a weary heart. The yellow, glaring lights dipped for the last time into a switchback curve. When they reappeared over the crest the two cars were within thirty yards of each other. The dark one darted across the road and barred the other's passage, while a warning acetylene lamp was waved in the air. With a jarring of brakes the noisy new-comer was brought to a halt.

"I say," cried an aggrieved voice, "'pon my soul, you know, we might have had an accident. Why the devil don't you keep your head-lights on? I never saw you till I nearly burst my radiators on you!"

The acetylene lamp, held forward, discovered a very angry young man, blue-eyed, yellow-moustached, and florid, sitting alone at the wheel of an antiquated twelve-horse Wolseley. Suddenly the aggrieved look upon his flushed face changed to one of absolute bewilderment. The driver in the dark car had sprung out of the seat, a black, long-barrelled, wicked-looking pistol was poked in the traveller's face, and behind the further sights of it was a circle of black cloth with two deadly eyes looking from as many slits.

"Hands up!" said a quick, stern voice. "Hands up! or, by the Lord——"

The young man was as brave as his neighbours, but the hands went up all the same.

"Get down!" said his assailant, curtly.

The young man stepped forth into the road, followed closely by the covering lantern and pistol. Once he made as if he would drop his hands, but a short, stern word jerked them up again.

"I say, look here, this is rather out o' date, ain't it?" said the traveller. "I expect you're joking—what?"

"Your watch," said the man behind the Mauser pistol.

"You can't really mean it!"

"Your watch, I say!"

"Well, take it, if you must. It's only plated, anyhow. You're two centuries out in time, or a few thousand miles longitude. The bush is your mark—or America. You don't seem in the picture on a Sussex road."

"Purse," said the man. There was something very compelling in his voice and methods. The purse was handed over.

"Any rings?"

"Don't wear 'em."

"Stand there! Don't move!"

The highwayman passed his victim and threw open the bonnet of the Wolseley. His hand, with a pair of steel pliers, was thrust deep into the works. There was the snap of a parting wire.

"Hang it all, don't crock my car!" cried the traveller.

He turned, but quick as a flash the pistol was at his head once more. And yet even in that flash, whilst the robber whisked round from the broken circuit, something had caught the young man's eye which made him gasp and start. He opened his mouth as if about to shout some words. Then with an evident effort he restrained himself.

"Get in," said the highwayman.

The traveller climbed back to his seat.

"What is your name?"

"Ronald Barker. What's yours?"

The masked man ignored the impertinence.

"Where do you live?" he asked.

"My cards are in my purse. Take one."

The highwayman sprang into his car, the engine of which had hissed and whispered in

gentle accompaniment to the interview. With a clash he threw back his side-brake, flung in his gears, twirled the wheel hard round, and cleared the motionless Wolseley. A minute later he was gliding swiftly, with all his lights gleaming, some half-mile southward on the road, while Mr. Ronald Barker, a side-lamp in his hand, was rummaging furiously among the odds and ends of his repair-box for a strand of wire which would connect up his electricity and set him on his way once more.

When he had placed a safe distance between himself and his victim, the adventurer eased up, took his booty from his pocket, replaced the watch, opened the purse, and counted out the money. Seven shillings constituted the miserable spoil. The poor result of his efforts seemed to amuse rather than annoy him, for he chuckled as he held the two half-crowns and the florin in the glare of his lantern. Then suddenly his manner changed. He thrust the thin purse back into his pocket, released his brake, and shot onwards with the same tense bearing with which he had started upon his adventure. The lights of another car were coming down the road.

On this occasion the methods of the highwayman were less furtive. Experience had clearly given him confidence. With lights still blazing, he ran towards the new-comers, and, halting in the middle of the road, summoned them to stop. From the point of view of the astonished travellers the result was sufficiently impressive. They saw in the glare of their own head-lights two glowing discs on either side of the long, black-muzzled snout of a high-power car, and above the masked face and menacing figure of its solitary driver. In the golden circle thrown by the rover there stood an elegant, open-topped, twenty-horse Humber, with an undersized and very astonished chauffeur blinking from under his peaked cap. From behind the wind-screen the veil-bound hats and wondering faces of two very pretty young women protruded, one upon either side, and a little crescendo of frightened squeaks announced the acute emotion of one of them. The other was cooler and more critical.

"'HANDS UP!' SAID A QUICK, STERN VOICE."

"Don't give it away, Hilda," she whispered. "Do shut up, and don't be such a silly. It's Bertie or one of the boys playing it on us."

"No, no! It's the real thing, Flossie. It's

a robber, sure enough. Oh, my goodness, whatever shall we do?"

"What an 'ad.'!" cried the other. "Oh, what a glorious 'ad.'! Too late now for the mornings, but they'll have it in every evening paper, sure."

"What's it going to cost?" groaned the other. "Oh, Flossie, Flossie, I'm sure I'm going to faint! Don't you think if we both screamed together we could do some good? Isn't he too awful with that black thing over his face? Oh, dear, oh, dear! He's killing poor little Alf!"

notes since the previous interview. "May I ask who you are?"

Miss Hilda was beyond coherent speech, but Miss Flossie was of a sterner mould.

"This is a pretty business," said she. "What right have you to stop us on the public road, I should like to know?"

"My time is short," said the robber, in a sterner voice. "I must ask you to answer my question."

"Tell him, Flossie! For goodness' sake be nice to him!" cried Hilda.

"Well, we're from the Gaiety Theatre,

"'I AM SORRY TO INCONVENIENCE YOU, LADIES,' SAID HE."

The proceedings of the robber were indeed somewhat alarming. Springing down from his car, he had pulled the chauffeur out of his seat by the scruff of his neck. The sight of the Mauser had cut short all remonstrance, and under its compulsion the little man had pulled open the bonnet and extracted the sparking-plugs. Having thus secured the immobility of his capture, the masked man walked forward, lantern in hand, to the side of the car. He had laid aside the gruff sternness with which he had treated Mr. Ronald Barker, and his voice and manner were gentle, though determined. He even raised his hat as a prelude to his address.

"I am sorry to inconvenience you, ladies," said he, and his voice had gone up several

London, if you want to know," said the young lady. "Perhaps you've heard of Miss Flossie Thornton and Miss Hilda Mannering? We've been playing a week at the Royal at Eastbourne, and took a Sunday off to ourselves. So now you know!"

"I must ask you for your purses and for your jewellery."

Both ladies set up shrill expostulations, but they found, as Mr. Ronald Barker had done, that there was something quietly compelling in this man's methods. In a very few minutes they had handed over their purses, and a pile of glittering rings, bangles, brooches, and chains was lying upon the front seat of the car. The diamonds glowed and shimmered like little electric points in the light of

the lantern. He picked up the glittering tangle and weighed it in his hand.

"Anything you particularly value?" he asked the ladies; but Miss Flossie was in no humour for concessions.

"Don't come the Claude Duval over us," said she; "take the lot or leave the lot. We don't want bits of our own given back to us."

"Except just Billy's necklace!" cried Hilda, and snatched at a little rope of pearls. The robber bowed, and released his hold of it.

"Anything else?"

The valiant Flossie began suddenly to cry. Hilda did the same. The effect upon the robber was surprising. He threw the whole heap of jewellery into the nearest lap.

"There! there! Take it!" he said. "It's trumpery stuff, anyhow. It's worth something to you, and nothing to me."

Tears changed in a moment to smiles.

"You're welcome to the purses. The ad. is worth ten times the money. But what a funny way of getting a living nowadays! Aren't you afraid of being caught? It's all so wonderful, like a scene from a comedy."

"It may be a tragedy," said the robber.

"Oh, I hope not—I'm sure I hope not!" cried the two ladies of the drama.

But the robber was in no mood for further conversation. Far away down the road tiny points of light had appeared. Fresh business was coming to him, and he must not mix his cases. Disengaging his machine, he raised his hat, and slipped off to meet this new arrival, while Miss Flossie and Miss Hilda leaned out of their derelict car, still palpitating from their adventure, and watched the red gleam of the tail-light until it merged in the darkness.

This time there was every sign of a rich prize. Behind its four grand lamps set in a broad frame of glittering brasswork the magnificent sixty-horse Daimler breasted the slope with the low, deep, even snore which proclaimed its enormous latent strength. Like some rich-laden, high-pooped Spanish galleon, she kept her course until the prowling craft ahead of her swept across her bows and brought her to a sudden halt. An angry face, red, blotched, and evil, shot out of the open window of the closed limousine. The robber was aware of a high, bald forehead, gross pendulous cheeks, and two little crafty eyes which gleamed between creases of fat.

"Out of my way, sir! Out of my way this instant!" cried a rasping voice. "Drive over him, Hearn! Get down and pull him off the seat. The fellow's drunk—he's drunk I say!"

Up to this point the proceedings of the modern highwayman might have passed as gentle. Now they turned in an instant to savagery. The chauffeur, a burly, capable fellow, incited by that raucous voice behind him, sprang from the car and seized the advancing robber by the throat. The latter hit out with the butt-end of his pistol, and the man dropped groaning on the road. Stepping over his prostrate body the adventurer pulled open the door, seized the stout occupant savagely by the ear, and dragged him bellowing on to the highway. Then, very deliberately, he struck him twice across the face with his open hand. The blows rang out like pistol-shots in the silence of the night. The fat traveller turned a ghastly colour and fell back half senseless against the side of the limousine. The robber dragged open his coat, wrenched away the heavy gold watch-chain with all that it held, plucked out the great diamond pin that sparkled in the black satin tie, dragged off four rings—not one of which could have cost less than three figures—and finally tore from his inner pocket a bulky leather note-book. All this property he transferred to his own black overcoat, and added to it the man's pearl cuff-links, and even the golden stud which held his collar. Having made sure that there was nothing else to take, the robber flashed his lantern upon the prostrate chauffeur, and satisfied himself that he was stunned and not dead. Then, returning to the master, he proceeded very deliberately to tear all his clothes from his body with a ferocious energy which set his victim whimpering and writhing in imminent expectation of murder.

Whatever his tormentor's intention may have been, it was very effectually frustrated. A sound made him turn his head, and there, no very great distance off, were the lights of a car coming swiftly from the north. Such a car must have already passed the wreckage which this pirate had left behind him. It was following his track with a deliberate purpose, and might be crammed with every county constable of the district.

The adventurer had no time to lose. He darted from his bedraggled victim, sprang into his own seat, and with his foot on the accelerator shot swiftly off down the road. Some way down there was a narrow side lane, and into this the fugitive turned, cracking on his high speed and leaving a good five miles between him and any pursuer before he ventured to stop. Then, in a quiet corner, he

counted over his booty of the evening—the paltry plunder of Mr. Ronald Barker, the rather better-furnished purses of the actresses, which contained four pounds between them, and, finally, the gorgeous jewellery and well-filled note-book of the plutocrat upon the Daimler. Five notes of fifty pounds, four of ten, fifteen sovereigns, and a number of valuable papers made up a most noble haul.

"HE HIT OUT WITH THE BUTT-END OF HIS PISTOL."

It was clearly enough for one night's work. The adventurer replaced all his ill-gotten gains in his pocket, and, lighting a cigarette, set forth upon his way with the air of a man who has no further care upon his mind.

It was on the Monday morning following upon this eventful evening that Sir Henry Hailworthy, of Walcot Old Place, having finished his breakfast in a leisurely fashion, strolled down to his study with the intention of writing a few letters before setting forth to take his place upon the county bench. Sir Henry was a Deputy-Lieutenant of the county; he was a baronet of ancient blood; he was a magistrate of ten years' standing; and he was famous above all as the breeder of many a good horse and the most desperate rider in all the Weald country. A tall, upstanding man, with a strong, clean-shaven face, heavy black eyebrows, and a square, resolute jaw, he was one whom it was better to call friend than foe. Though nearly fifty years of age, he bore no sign of having passed his youth, save that Nature, in one of her freakish moods, had planted one little feather of white hair above his right ear, making the

rest of his thick black curls the darker by contrast. He was in thoughtful mood this morning, for having lit his pipe he sat at his desk with his blank note-paper in front of him, lost in a deep reverie.

Suddenly his thoughts were brought back to the present. From behind the laurels of the curving drive there came a low, clanking sound, which swelled into the clatter and jingle of an ancient car. Then from round the corner there swung an old-fashioned Wolseley, with a fresh-complexioned, yellow-moustached young man at the wheel. Sir Henry sprang to his feet at the sight, and then sat down once more. He rose again as a minute later the footman announced Mr. Ronald Barker. It was an early visit, but Barker was Sir Henry's intimate friend. As each was a fine shot, horseman, and billiard-player, there was much in common between the two men, and the younger (and poorer) was in the habit of spending at least two evenings a week at Walcot Old Place. Therefore, Sir Henry advanced cordially with outstretched hand to welcome him.

"You're an early bird this morning," said he. "What's up? If you are going over to Lewes we could motor together."

But the younger man's demeanour was peculiar and ungracious. He disregarded the hand which was held out to him, and he stood pulling at his own long moustache and staring with troubled, questioning eyes at the county magistrate.

"Well, what's the matter?" asked the latter.

Still the young man did not speak. He was clearly on the edge of an interview which he found it most difficult to open. His host grew impatient.

"You don't seem yourself this morning. What on earth is the matter? Anything upset you?"

"Yes," said Ronald Barker, with emphasis.

"What has?"

"*You* have."

Sir Henry smiled. "Sit down, my dear fellow. If you have any grievance against me, let me hear it."

Barker sat down. He seemed to be gathering himself for a reproach. When it did come it was like a bullet from a gun.

"Why did you rob me last night?"

The magistrate was a man of iron nerve. He showed neither surprise nor resentment. Not a muscle twitched upon his calm, set face.

"Why do you say that I robbed you last night?"

"A big, tall fellow in a motor-car stopped me on the Mayfield road. He poked a pistol in my face and took my purse and my watch. Sir Henry, that man was you."

The magistrate smiled.

"Am I the only big, tall man in the district? Am I the only man with a motor-car?"

"Do you think I couldn't tell a Rolls-Royce when I see it—I, who spend half my life on a car and the other half under it? Who has a Rolls-Royce about here except you?"

"My dear Barker, don't you think that such a modern highwayman as you describe would be more likely to operate outside his own district? How many hundred Rolls-Royces are there in the South of England?"

"No, it won't do, Sir Henry—it won't do! Even your voice, though you sunk it a few notes, was familiar enough to me. But hang it, man! What did you do it *for?* That's what gets over me. That you should stick up me, one of your closest friends, a man that worked himself to the bone when you stood for the division—and all for the sake of a Brummagem watch and a few shillings—is simply incredible."

"Simply incredible," repeated the magistrate, with a smile.

"And then those actresses, poor little devils, who have to earn all they get. I followed you down the road, you see. That was a dirty trick, if ever I heard one. The City shark was different. If a chap must go a-robbing, that sort of fellow is fair game. But your friend, and then the girls—well, I say again, I couldn't have believed it."

"Then why believe it?"

"Because it *is* so."

"Well, you seem to have persuaded yourself to that effect. You don't seem to have much evidence to lay before anyone else."

"I could swear to you in a police-court. What put the lid on it was that when you were cutting my wire—and an infernal liberty it was!—I saw that white tuft of yours sticking out from behind your mask."

For the first time an acute observer might have seen some slight sign of emotion upon the face of the baronet.

"You seem to have a fairly vivid imagination," said he.

His visitor flushed with anger.

"See here, Hailworthy," said he, opening his hand and showing a small, jagged triangle of black cloth. "Do you see that? It was on the ground near the car of the young women. You must have ripped it off as you jumped out from your seat. Now send for that heavy black driving-coat of yours. If

you don't ring the bell I'll ring it myself, and we shall have it in. I'm going to see this thing through, and don't you make any mistake about that."

The baronet's answer was a surprising one. He rose, passed Barker's chair, and, walking over to the door, he locked it and placed the key in his pocket.

threatening me, Hailworthy. I am going to do my duty, and you won't bluff me out of it."

"I have no wish to bluff you. When I spoke of a tragedy I did not mean to you. What I meant was that there are some turns which this affair cannot be allowed to take. I have neither kith nor kin, but there is the

"WALKING OVER TO THE DOOR, HE LOCKED IT."

"You *are* going to see it through," said he. "I'll lock you in until you do. Now we must have a straight talk, Barker, as man to man, and whether it ends in tragedy or not depends on you."

He had half-opened one of the drawers in his desk as he spoke. His visitor frowned in anger.

"You won't make matters any better by

family honour, and some things are impossible."

"It is late to talk like that."

"Well, perhaps it is; but not too late. And now I have a good deal to say to you. First of all, you are quite right, and it was I who held you up last night on the Mayfield road."

"But why on earth——"

"All right. Let me tell it my own way. First I want you to look at these." He unlocked a drawer and he took out two small packages. "These were to be posted in London to-night. This one is addressed to you, and I may as well hand it over to you at once. It contains your watch and your purse. So, you see, bar your cut wire you would have been none the worse for your adventure. This other packet is addressed to the young ladies of the Gaiety Theatre, and their properties are enclosed. I hope I have convinced you that I had intended full reparation in each case before you came to accuse me?"

"Well?" asked Barker.

"Well, we will now deal with Sir George Wilde, who is, as you may not know, the senior partner of Wilde and Guggendorf, the founders of the Ludgate Bank of infamous memory. His chauffeur is a case apart. You may take it from me, upon my word of honour, that I had plans for the chauffeur. But it is the master that I want to speak of. You know that I am not a rich man myself. I expect all the county knows that. When Black Tulip lost the Derby I was hard hit. And other things as well. Then I had a legacy of a thousand. This infernal bank was paying seven per cent. on deposits. I knew Wilde. I saw him. I asked him if it was safe. He said it was. I paid it in, and within forty-eight hours the whole thing went to bits. It came out before the Official Receiver that Wilde had known for three months that nothing could save him. And yet he took all my cargo aboard his sinking vessel. He was all right—confound him! He had plenty besides. But I had lost all my money and no law could help me. Yet he had robbed me as clearly as one man could rob another. I saw him, and he laughed in my face. Told me to stick to Consols, and that the lesson was cheap at the price. So I just swore that, by hook or by crook, I would get level with him. I knew his habits, for I had made it my business to do so. I knew that he came back from Eastbourne on Sunday nights. I knew that he carried a good sum with him in his pocket-book. Well, it's *my* pocket-book now. Do you mean to tell me that I'm not morally justified in what I have done? By the Lord, I'd have left the devil as bare as he left many a widow and orphan if I'd had the time!"

"That's all very well. But what about me? What about the girls?"

"Have some common sense, Barker. Do you suppose that I could go and stick up this one personal enemy of mine and escape detection? It was impossible. I was bound to make myself out to be just a common robber who had run up against him by accident. So I turned myself loose on the high road and took my chance. As the devil would have it, the first man I met was yourself. I was a fool not to recognize that old ironmonger's store of yours by the row it made coming up the hill. When I saw you I could hardly speak for laughing. But I was bound to carry it through. The same with the actresses. I'm afraid I gave myself away, for I couldn't take their little fal-lals, but I had to keep up a show. Then came my man himself. There was no bluff about that. I was out to skin him, and I did. Now, Barker, what do you think of it all? I had a pistol at your head last night, and, by George! whether you believe it or not, you have one at mine this morning!"

The young man rose slowly, and with a broad smile he wrung the magistrate by the hand.

"Don't do it again. It's too risky," said he. "The swine would score heavily if you were taken."

"You're a good chap, Barker," said the magistrate. "No, I won't do it again. Who's the fellow who talks of 'one crowded hour of glorious life'? By George! it's too fascinating. I had the time of my life! Talk of fox-hunting! No, I'll never touch it again, for it might get a grip of me."

A telephone rang sharply upon the table, and the baronet put the receiver to his ear. As he listened he smiled across at his companion.

"I'm rather late this morning," said he, "and they are waiting for me to try some petty larcenies on the county bench."

The Seaside of the Future.

Forecasts of Well-Known Artists.

N Bond Street, in Regent Street, in Oxford Street, and in many shady nooks adjacent, professors of history in the future sit hard at work, charging high fees and attracting many eager listeners. Some trace over the lines on their customers' hands with a little stick; some stare into a glass ball and prattle fluently of all that is to come to pass; some take notes of dates and consult the Nautical Almanac, divining from the relative positions of planets at a particular moment of the past what sort of wedding Miss Serena Jones is to experience in the future; and others again are above all such superfluous toil, and simply stare over their customers' heads and lecture. If one half, one quarter, even one tenth the number of professors of history in the past were to establish themselves in London to lecture on their branch of history, exactly that number of landlords would be disappointed of their first quarter's rent, and the bankruptcy returns of that same quarter would rise by the identical figure. From which the philosopher may perceive that the future is a deal more popular than the past; and, although it is from the experience of the past that the wise predict the future, most people would seem to prefer to pay somebody wiser than themselves to do the actual work of deduction.

So we have had the vaticinations of the wise on all sorts of questions—the Future of Warfare, the Future of Electricity, the Cookery of the Future, the Metaphysical Ontology of the Future. But to THE STRAND MAGAZINE has been reserved the glory of first offering a guess at the Seaside of the Future; and not one guess only (that of the present writer) for we are privileged to present also the Revelations of Robinson—Heath Robinson, to be exact—the Bodings of Brock, the Horoscope of Hassall, the Soothsayings of Starr Wood, the Rhabdomancies of René Bull, and the Rhapsodies of Rountree.

Mr. Heath Robinson's prognostications are all for an increasingly decorous respectability and an extreme of personal comfort. We are to prepare for bathing-machines in the Gothic style, in the Chinese style, and in the classic Greek style, with pneumatic tyres and curtained windows and flower-pots in convenient positions. An ingenious adaptation of the angler's reel will be fitted to the front-door post to "play" bathing children into safety when they grow too venturesome. Decorous and butler-like attendants, in a tasteful combination of evening and bathing dress, will regulate the temperature of the water by curiously-simple and direct means; and not only regulate its temperature, but scent it and soften it with patent powders from convenient tins. There is nothing violent, nothing revolutionary or disturbing in the Robinsonian Revelation, except that the beach is swept bare of niggers and bun-sellers, and the visitors, it would seem, are expected to be vastly outnumbered by the attendants deputed to minister to their comfort. From which we may conjecture that the Seaside of the Future will be a deal more Select and a vast lot more expensive. So that we are forewarned to begin to save up.

But no doubt Mr. Robinson will allow us to supplement his suggestions with a few positive statements of our own. On the day when his system of warming and scenting the sad sea waves is inaugurated (and not an hour sooner) a corps of suitably-attired elderly laundresses will be ranged on the shore in case of rough weather, on the smallest approach of which they will immediately proceed, with large flat-irons, made hot at the same fire that heats the kettles, to iron

At the seaside of the future, according to Mr. W. Heath Robinson.

Mr. H. M. Brock's idea of the seaside a few years hence.

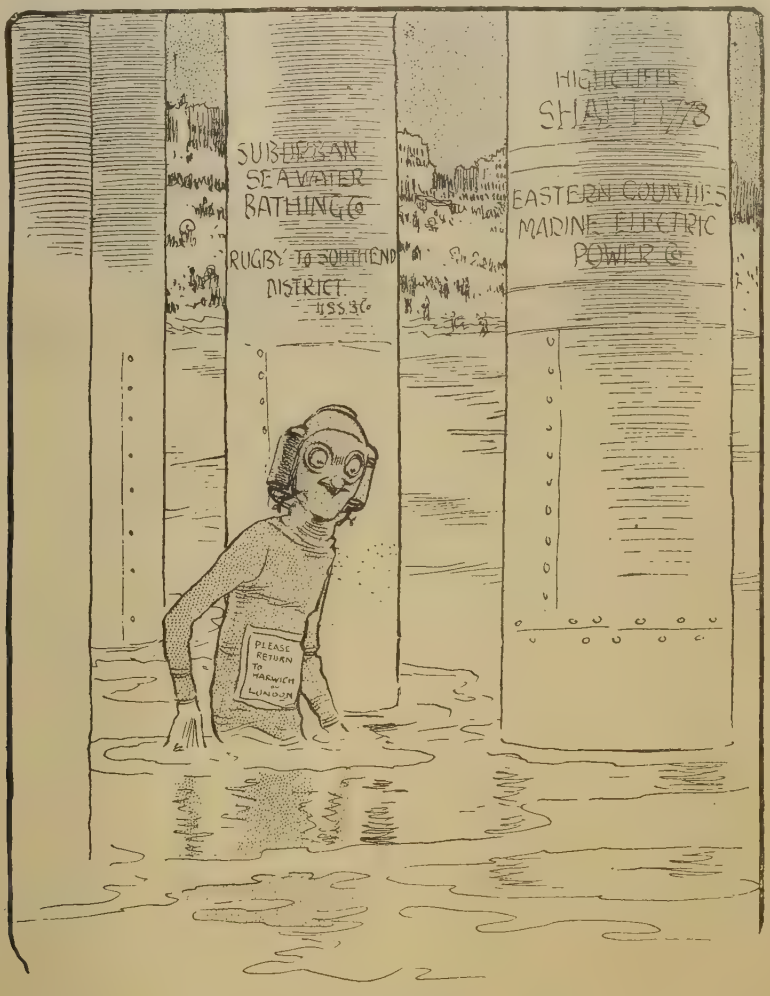
out the ocean to a proper and comfortable flatness; while a body of gentlemanly junior clerks will be at hand to supply sheets of the best blotting-paper to all visitors who wish to bathe without experiencing the uncomfortable wetness now inseparable from the pursuit.

Mr. Brock, on the other hand, predicts developments in a wholly different direction; the seaside will become more and more popular rather than Select (with a capital), and the diversions of the holiday will follow the same course. New sports will be invented; this, after all, is an easy prediction, for each new fair or exhibition brings us already new mechanical discomforts for which people gladly pay, whence we have Swooping the Swoop (if that is the right name), Flimping the Flump, Bashing the Bang, and Winging the Wang. (As a fact, these names are quite new, and inventors may fit them with appropriate sports on a royalty basis.)

Mr. Brock forbodes Splashing the Splosh and Walking the Waves, the latter a sport wherein at last the human biped achieves the triumph of travelling in two boats at once, "having a pair on" in the time-honoured manner of skates at the Serpentine—without, let us hope, the aid of the gimlet. And yet there may be a difference of opinion, even about that, for one remembers well the thoroughgoing chair-and-gimlet merchant at that same Serpentine who, to the agonized howl of his victim, "Hi! hi! you're driving it into my foot!" cheerily answered, "Never mind, sir—better 'ave 'em on firm!" And there is no disputing that the wave-walker of the future *must* "'ave 'em on firm" if he is ever to come back and restore his boots as an honest sportsman should. He will also have to be careful of many other things; he must keep scrupulously on the topside of his boats and he must avoid walking his waves on any spot where a splosh-splasher is likely to splash his splosh. With his airship trip round the lightship Mr. Brock is careful to prophesy what he knows; and, as for the rest, it is comforting to observe that the general stripiness of things at the seaside—tents, bathing-costumes, blinds, and pavilion-roofs—is to be maintained as bravely in the future as in the past.

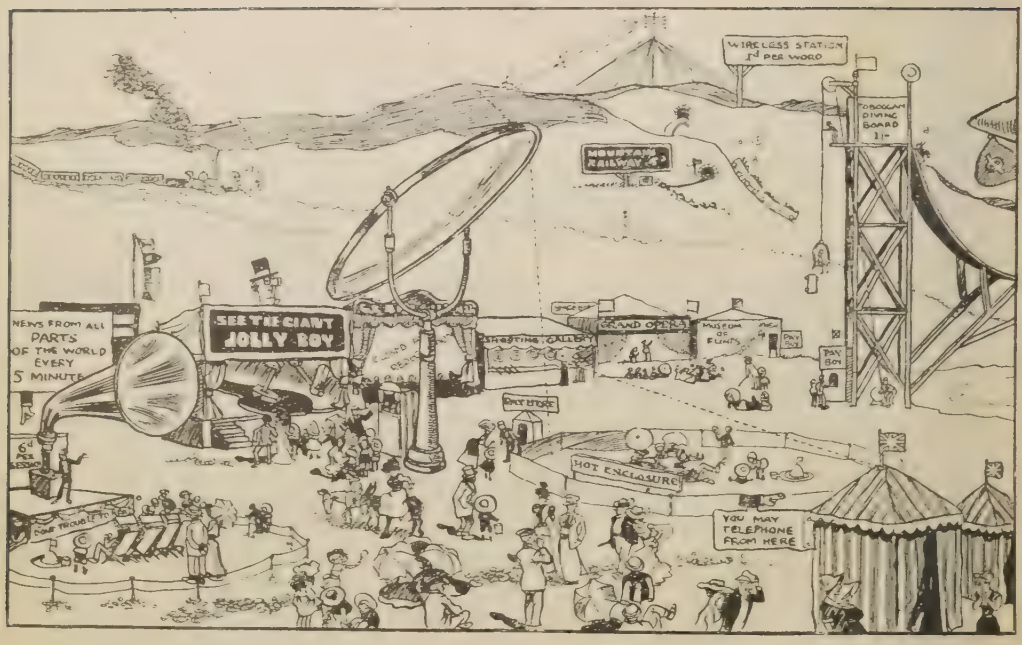
Mr. Hassall is more mysterious and less definite. Everything on shore will be so inordinately "improved" that the discreet

holiday-maker will demand facilities for staying in the sea as long as possible, away from it all. Extraordinary and elaborate long-distance swimming costumes will affright the ocean and its denizens, and even at the cost of such an appearance as Mr. Hassall depicts the nerve-racked toiler will endeavour to shut from his ears and eyes the blessings of civilization as they will exist in the future.



Mr. John Hassall's peep into the future.

Indeed, only those who wish to swim away for days together out of sight and hearing of things as they will be will need to go to the seaside at all; for all the advantages now sought in a coast holiday will be brought to one's house by "pipe-lines," like petroleum. All the tubular pier-supports will be utilized for commercial purposes. Sea-water will be "laid on" through one, so that the dweller in the Midlands may paddle at home and build castles with the sand driven by hydraulic pressure through another. Ozone will blow furiously through still another tube, as some sort of air of a totally different smell already blows furiously through the Tube which is called Tuppeny. Through still another pipe the resistless power of the immemorial sea will send electric force to light our houses, ring our bells, grow our potatoes, cure our rheumatisms, and kill any absent-minded, person who catches hold of the wrong wire; and through still one more such pipe, baited all the way along with patent indestructible rubber worms, a constant supply of fresh fish will pour into our kitchens, either alive, or, by a simple attachment of a wire from the electric supply, cooked to a turn and



Mr. René Bull's forecast of the manner in which

swimming still, but now in oyster sauce. Periwinkles and whelks will be distributed throughout the East-end from one pipe, and the empty shells will be returned through another, to be refilled with "forced" inhabitants grown under electric stimulus and returned to the East-end once more, doubtless, by aid of careful breeding, with pins attached for extraction. Thus the whelks and periwinkles will be humanely saved the labour of growing fresh shells, and the toiling millions of London will be provided with an inexhaustible supply of the aliment dearest to their palates, whereby the humblest will speedily achieve an indigestion equal to the severest now monopolized by the exclusive rich.

Mr. René Bull refreshes us vastly. He prophesies new things, as any sage must, but he gives us comforting assurance of the survival of many old friends. An airship will take day-trippers to London and back at a very reasonable fare; but niggers will still wear exaggerated hats and play banjos on the beach. A variant of Splashing the Splosh, in the form of a Toboggan Diving-board, will make perilous some small area of the near ocean; but the common donkey-ride of the seashore will flourish unchecked as in the ancient days of the early twentieth century and eke the later days of the nineteenth. A bold attempt will be made to grapple with the uncertainties of the British climate by the formation of a "Hot Enclosure," warmed through an immense burning-glass. Of course we *do* have summers (now and again in the course of a century), when the last thing any holiday-maker desires is to sit in a "Hot Enclosure"; doubtless by the time such another summer arrives there will have been ample time to think out an invention to deal with that. To the many inventions already ministering to the popular virtue of laziness is to be added yet another; you are to be saved the trouble of reading your newspaper by sitting at your ease before the trumpet of an immense phonograph, which gathers and delivers news from all parts of the world as fast as things happen. The advertisements will need to be very skilfully wrapped up, or they will be howled down as soon as they begin; and here is another advantage. You *can't* howl down a page advertisement of Chilblain Pills in your paper to-day; some day you will not be so helpless.

The attractions of bathing will be enhanced by the presence of a tame shark, reduced so low as to endure unceasing insult without snapping at as much as a finger, and kept fed, it would seem, by stray fragments of disintegrated aviator falling casually from the heavens above. For the rest, the usual side-shows will persist, and the pay-box will be as prominent a feature of each as it is even now.

Mr. Starr Wood looks also to mechanical

we shall spend our holidays in the days to come.

invention to achieve most of the changes of the future, and these he offers in full measure. He has his airship, of course—the atmosphere looks uncomfortably empty to-day without one. But it flies not for a trip round a light-ship but for the convenience of divers, who may splash the splosh without Mr. Brock's preliminary slide. The trippers trip in aeroplanes, and a last decaying longshoreman makes a last desperate attempt to sell the last derelict boat for which there remains no market, all the museums presumably being fully supplied with such antiquities.

The advance of political benevolence financed by the tax-gatherer enables everybody to spend his money in amusements, the vulgar requirement of food being provided free from so many centres that they are driven to compete with each other to justify their continuance. Thus the Free Public Luncheon Tent on the beach, taking a hint from the concave and convex mirrors of earlier establishments, in capital letters invites the beneficiary to go in thin and come out stout.

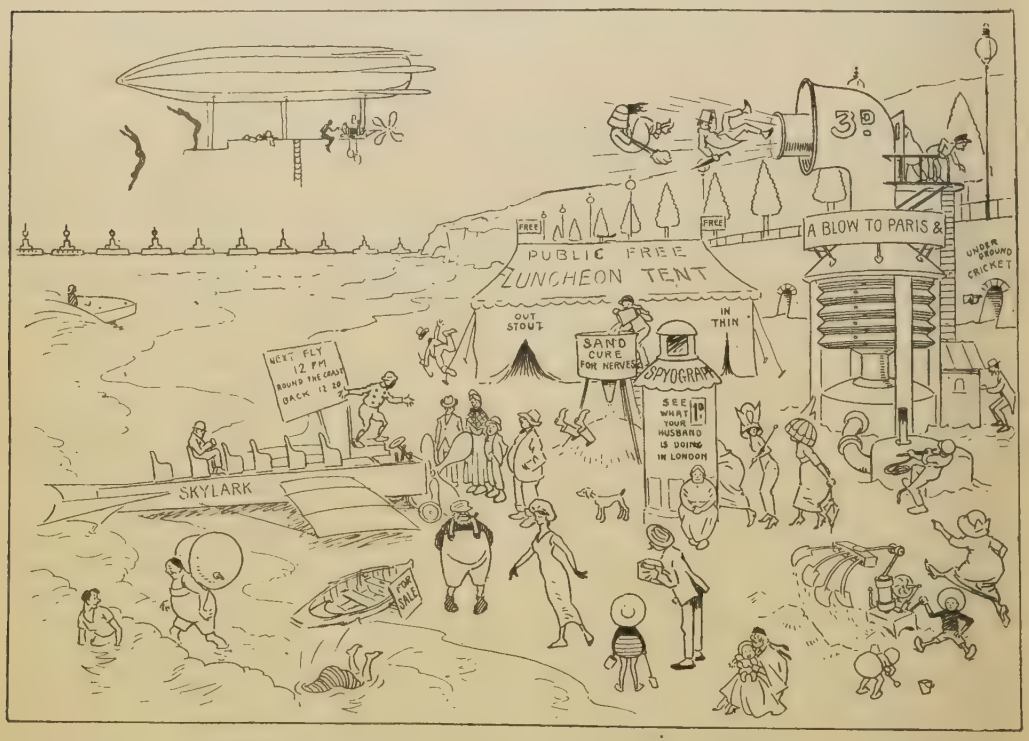
The Sand Cure for Nerves, hard by, is no new thing, but is systematized and made thorough; the haphazard shovellings of small nephews and nieces being replaced by a properly-supported reservoir with a correctly-graduated outlet. And the unscientific clairvoyance of the Bond Street seers gives place to a truly valuable instrument, the Spyograph, whereby an overseeing eye may be kept on an absent spouse at the much-reduced fee of one penny. Even the aeroplane has become a commonplace, and somewhat *vieux jeu;* only the commonalty patronize its "trips round the coast," and the truly up-to-date take a Blow to Paris at the extremely moderate fee of threepence. The mechanism is an incredibly advanced and enlarged application of the common pea-shooter of other days, and among its many advantages over the common aeroplane a vastly-increased degree of danger is to be counted, together with something very like a certainty of a most monumental cropper at the end of the journey. There are economic advantages, too; you pay your threepence and off you go, with no possibility of further expenditure on the journey, unless you chance to turn over in your flight and squander your coin from your inverted pockets; whereas, once you are on an aeroplane and at a giddy height, as is well known, the aviator who has charged you a shilling to go up is apt to demand ten to bring you down again.

Even the children, Mr. Starr Wood assures us, will insist on extraordinary mechanical improvements in their toys, and a patent internal-combustion eccentric-action slide-valve quadruple spade, geared up to five sand-castles an hour, will be demanded by every small boy of real spirit.

Something significant, yet dubious of interpretation, as is the way of Old Moore himself,

is visible in the unbroken row of battleships lying in the offing. Is this so joyful an increase in *Dreadnoughts* that the whole coast is impassably surrounded, or are they merely a row of obsolete curiosities lined up for the amusement of the tripper? As even Old Moore is sometimes driven to say, time alone can tell.

But Mr. Rountree looks farther ahead than the rest. It must have been noticed by will be rewarded by the advent of paying crowds anxious for new sensations. Fathers enjoying their seaside holiday in the air over the seashore will bring their families to inspect caged specimens of curious human creatures of a bygone age—poets, artists, somewhat truthful politicians and such out-of-date creatures, doctors (and perhaps bishops) who did not advertise. The New Barnum's own advertisements will be arranged



Mr. Starr Wood's conception of the health resort of the future.

everybody already that the mere surface of the earth has become of late years somewhat unfashionable; to fly over it and to tunnel under it is the tendency of the age, and no doubt as the air grows thicker with aviators the rest of humanity will all the more eagerly tend to burrow underground, if only from sheer terror for their heads. Mr. Rountree foresees the time when the actual ground surface shall be abandoned totally by all but the birds, who shall have been driven out of the air by overcrowding. The Barnum of the coming day, the showman-genius of the future, will seize on the fact to astonish the world by the novel and striking enterprise of opening his show positively on the uninhabited surface of the earth, and his audacity in suitably upside-down methods. Whereas in our day exceptionally enterprising advertisers employ aviators to drop handbills from aloft, the New Barnum will send up his handbills from below, attached to toy balloons. And, as contrasted with past showmen who floated their announcements against the sky, he will spread his wide on the abandoned earth. Greater airships, more enormous aeroplanes than ever will crowd the air for the accommodation of cargoes and crowds, but the individual flyer will just wear his personal flying suit, fitted with small and natty wings, with a neat little electric coil on his head, and a curly wire or two for some purpose that doubtless Mr. Rountree knows all about, but doesn't explain.

Mr. Harry Rountree's vision of the days when the earth is forsaken for the sky.

In those stirring days many among the quieter of us will take to the Tubes, and stop there. Mr. Starr Wood has already given us a hint of some such expedient when he announces his underground cricket. We will go down to the sea in tubes, and we will stay underground, with glass walls through which we can gaze on the sea below the surface without being distracted and maddened (not to say pole-axed) by flying things above; and there we will sit in bathing-machines of antique pattern, surrounded by patent silent niggers and stuffed boatmen, and perhaps we may get a little sleep.

The Lacquer Cabinet.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

Illustrated by C. H. Taffs.

QUINNEY chuckled as he re-read the letter which offered him a thousand pounds for his cherished lacquer cabinet, and he kept on rubbing his yellow, wrinkled hands and muttering: "Like to have it, wouldn't you? But you won't, my man. No, by gum, not if you offered double the money!"

He was alone in the sanctuary of his best things. The heavy shutters were up, a wood fire glowed as if with pleasure upon a steel fender of the best Adam's period. The electric lights in amber-coloured globes shone softly, caressing the Chippendale furniture and throwing delicate shadows upon the Aubusson carpet. Only the elect entered this famous room, and every article in it was known and beloved by the great collectors who dealt with Quinney. The passion for beautiful things was in his blood. His father had started a small curiosity shop in Salisbury, and Quinney himself, as a boy of ten, used to gloat over the Ming figures, and touch them furtively in flagrant disobedience of rules. After his father's death he had moved to London and bought a fine Georgian house in Soho, which he had gradually filled with masterpieces. He was never tired of gazing at them with enraptured eyes. And he refused, as he grew older and richer, to part with the gems of his collection. Nobody, not even Quinney, knew what the contents of this particular room were worth. Beside himself, only two persons entered it—his daughter, Posy, and his principal assistant, James Migott, a young man with a nose almost as keen as Quinney's for beauty, and a fine pair of eyes which, in contrast to Quinney's, dwelt lovingly upon what was animate as well as inanimate.

Quinney, from being much by himself, had acquired the habit of thinking aloud; and, although his surroundings were Attic, his speech remained rudely Doric. As he tore up the millionaire's letter he muttered: "Wonderful man I am! To think that I should live to refuse an offer of a thousand pounds for that cabinet! Sometimes I'm surprised at myself. By gum, I am!"

He approached the lacquer cabinet, a superb example of the best Japanese art of the eighteenth century, black and gold, with gold storks exquisitely delineated flying amongst golden flowers. The petals of the flowers were made of thin sheets of pure gold let into the lacquer. The stand upon which it stood was English, with curved ball and claw legs, also a miracle of craftsmanship. Nothing stood upon the cabinet except a large jar of the rare Kang-shi *famille noire* porcelain. The inside of the cabinet was as lavishly decorated as the outside, and it was signed with the name of the greatest of Japanese artists. The American millionaire had asked for a copy of this signature.

Quinney gloated over the decoration for at least five minutes; and then he noticed that the key was missing. Nothing was kept in the cabinet, and the lock, possibly, was the only part of it which could be criticized, for a child could have picked it with a hairpin. Quinney's eyes wandered to the Kang-shi jar, and presently he took it lovingly into his hands, stroking it, enjoying voluptuously the texture of the paste. He put his tongue to it, an infallible test; and from long practice he could have told you, had he been blind, that the temperature of the porcelain and its texture were confirmation stronger than any marks of quality and date. Then he thrust his hand into the interior to satisfy himself for the thousandth time of its amazing finish.

Inside the jar was the key of the cabinet!

This astonished him, because he was living in a world from which the surprising had been rigorously eliminated. Why was the key of the cabinet hidden in the jar? Who had placed it there? Posy—or James Migott?

He sat down upon the finest Chippendale settee in the world to reflect upon this incident. Oddly enough, it disturbed him, although it was reasonable to suppose that his daughter

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"INSIDE THE JAR WAS THE KEY OF THE CABINET!"

intended to tell him where she had put the key, which certainly fitted the lock too loosely and had been known to fall out of it.

Finally, he decided that Posy, good girl, had chosen an excellent place for the key; but she ought to have told him. He would speak to her on the morrow.

He put the key back into the jar, and as he did so a clock began to chime the hour of midnight. Quinney listened to the silvery bells with the same enraptured expression which the gold petals upon the cabinet evoked. He reflected that time passed too nimbly when a man was perfectly happy. As a rule, he went to bed at half-past eleven, but the American's letter had engrossed his attention unduly. The man wanted the cabinet so tremendously, and this lust for another's possession was well understood by Quinney, for he suffered cruelly from it himself. There were bits in the Museums which he would have stolen without compunction, could he have "lifted" them without fear of detection.

He switched off the electric light, and by the faint glow of the fire turned to mount the stairs leading to his bedroom. But he paused on the threshold of his room, for a last glance at the sanctuary. Some of the things he would have liked to kiss, and this sentiment seemed to wax stronger with advancing years. He never left his wonderful room without reflecting sadly that the day would inevitably come when he would have to leave it for ever.

At this moment he heard approaching footsteps—soft, stealthy footsteps, which might be those of a midnight robber!

Quinney was no coward, and he was comfortably aware that his precious things would not be likely to tempt the ordinary burglar, because of the difficulty in disposing of them. Noiselessly he withdrew to the outer room,

"SOFT, STEALTHY FOOTSTEPS."

which held the furniture and china that could be bought. From the darkness of this outer room he could see without being seen.

He nearly betrayed his presence when Posy entered the sanctuary, clothed in a silk dressing-gown, with her pretty hair in two long plaits. What on earth was the girl up to? She glided across the Aubusson carpet, upon which great ladies of the French pre-Revolution period had stood, and approached the lacquer cabinet. She thrust a white, slender arm into the great jar, took from it the key, unlocked the cabinet, opened it, waited a moment, with her back to her father, who was not able to see what she was doing, closed and locked the cabinet, replaced the key in the jar, and flitted away as silently as she had come!

Quinney wiped the dew of bewilderment from his high but narrow brow.

The girl must be crazy!

He waited till he heard the closing of her door upstairs; then he turned on the light and went to the cabinet. In the second drawer he found a letter, which he read.

MY OWN BLUE BIRD!

Quinney paused. He had not seen Maeterlinck's famous play, but Posy had raved about it—with absurd enthusiasm, so he had thought at the time—and he remembered that the Blue Bird represented happiness.

MY OWN BLUE BIRD,—It was splendidly clever of you to think of using that stupid old cabinet as a pillar-box, and the fact that we are corresponding under the very nose of father makes the whole affair deliriously exciting and romantic. I should like to see his funny old face, if he could read this. . . .

"You shall, my girl," thought Quinney, grimly. He knew that the "Blue Bird" must be James Migott, drat him! It could be nobody else. Quinney had guarded Posy very jealously. James was not permitted to speak to her except in his presence. And no letter to her, coming in the ordinary way, would have escaped his notice. So! this young man, whom he had trained to be a faithful servant, was carrying on a clandestine love affair with his only child and using the lacquer cabinet as a pillar-box? He wiped his mouth with the silk handkerchief which he used to remove dust from his china, and his fingers trembled, for he was quivering with rage. Then he finished the letter:—

We have got to be most awfully careful, because if he saw me talking to you, except about his ridiculous

business, he would simply chatter with rage. And, make no mistake, my feelings wouldn't count. I'm not nearly so dear to him as that Chelsea figure by Roubiliac. He only cares for things, not a brass farthing for persons. But, oh, Jim, I care more for you than all the things in the world, and I have had no love since mother died. Think of what I have to make up!

I shall get your answer to this when father is having his cigar after lunch.—Your loving POSY.

Quinney put the billet back in the drawer, muttering to himself, "I shall get the dog's answer *before* lunch. He sha'n't complain that I gave him no opportunity." Grinding his teeth, he consigned James Migott to the nethermost Hades; and at the same moment he decided that the Yankee—confound him also!—should have the cabinet. For evermore he would hate the sight of it. As for James Migott, the Blue Bird, he'd be blue indeed within twenty-four hours. Blue Bird, indeed! A serpent! A crawling snake!

He went to bed, but sleep refused to soothe him, although he dismissed James Migott from his thoughts, which dwelt with concentration upon Posy. Had he not given the best of everything to the ungrateful baggage? And in return—*this!* She dared to speak of his business as "ridiculous." The adjective bit deep into his mind. *Ridiculous?* What the devil did she mean? When his father died the business was worth at most eight thousand pounds. To-day the contents of the sanctuary alone would fetch at Christie's a round fifty thousand, if the right people were bidding. And they would be bidding. From the four quarters of the earth they would come, to bid against each other for the famous Quinney collection. *Ridiculous!* Suppose he left everything to the nation, thereby immortalizing himself? The Quinney Gallery! That sounded well. Suppose he offered the gift during his lifetime? Would his gracious Sovereign speak of his business as ridiculous? All right. If this idiot of a girl cared for James Migott more than for his collections, she might have him—and be hanged to her! Would the dog want her without the collections? He smiled grimly at the thought.

Next day he rose at the usual time and breakfasted alone with Posy, who smiled deceitfully, as if she were the best daughter in the kingdom. He looked at her sourly, contrasting her with the Chelsea shepherdess, modelled by the illustrious Frenchman. She was nearly as pretty, but common pottery, not porcelain, not the *pâte tendre* beloved by connoisseurs. He remarked a melting, luscious glaze about her eyes. She was thinking of her Blue Bird, the shameless baggage. At nine James Migott appeared, punctual to the minute. Quinney said to him, curtly:—

"I am going out. You had better overhaul those Chippendale chairs in my room. I am thinking of having that old needlework cleaned. Get it off the chairs very carefully."

"Right you are!" exclaimed James.

There was the same shining glaze in his blue eyes as he met frankly the gaze of his employer. It would not be easy to replace James. He could be trusted with things, but not with persons. His exclamation, "Right you are!" tickled agreeably Quinney's vanity. He was nearly always right, everybody admitted that. No big dealer had made fewer mistakes. That German fellow, who had made such an ass of himself about that wax figure, he was ridiculous, if you like. How Quinney had laughed at his egregious blunder!

At half-past twelve he returned. James Migott had removed the precious needlework without breaking a thread. His employer grunted approval. "You love this business?" he asked.

"I like it," said James.

He left the house to get his midday meal at a neighbouring restaurant in Dean Street. Upstairs Posy was playing Thalberg's "Home, Sweet Home" with a firmness of touch and brilliancy of technique which indicated that the money lavished upon her musical education had not been wasted. With the *arpeggios* rippling through his mind, Quinney opened the lacquer cabinet. Yes; James had taken Posy's letter, and another—written upon the business note-paper—lay in its place. The lovers had not troubled to close the envelopes, so secure did they fancy themselves in their fool's paradise.

Quinney read as follows:—

MY SWEETEST POSY,—I believe that your father does really love you, although he may not show it. He's a true lover of beauty in any form, and it's hardly possible that he doesn't prize you as the most beautiful of all his beautiful possessions. I am doing my best to please him and to win his confidence. As you say, we must be very careful and very patient, but he's taught me how to wait for the things worth having. I know that I must wait and work for you. —Your faithful JIM.

Quinney read the letter twice and then replaced it in the cabinet. Throughout luncheon he said little, but stared furtively at his daughter, wondering whether James Migott—no mean judge—was right in affirming that of all his possessions she was the most beautiful. He had intended to speak

to Posy and James after luncheon; he had planned a little dramatic scene, during which he would appear at the moment when Posy was taking the letter from the cabinet. Then, before she had time to collect her wits, he would summon the Blue Bird and deal trenchantly with the guilty pair.

Presently he said, quietly:—

"I've had an offer of a thousand pounds for the lacquer cabinet from Dupont Jordan."

She answered, composedly, "Are you going to sell it?"

"Perhaps."

Lord! What an actress she was! And not yet twenty! When and where and how did she learn to wear this mask? He eyed her with wrinkled interrogation, asking himself dozens of questions. Had she always pretended with him? What was she really like—inside? As a collector of precious things, he had acquired the habit of examining meticulously every article of *vertu*, searching for the inimitable marks, the *patine*, not to be reproduced by the most cunning craftsman, the indelible handwriting of genius and time. But he had never searched for such marks in his daughter. When he lit his cigar, she went out of the room and he sat silent, not enjoying his cigar, wondering what her face looked like as she read the letter from her own Blue Bird. What James Migott had written gave him pause. He decided to read more of the correspondence before he pronounced judgment.

That afternoon he made a list of the "gems" which might be offered to the nation or left to it as the Quinney bequest. At midnight Posy would descend from her room and place another billet in the pillar-box. The pillar-box! To what base uses might a gold lacquer cabinet degenerate!

He left the door of his bedroom ajar, and at midnight he heard the faint rustling of her dressing-gown as she stole downstairs and up again. At one, when he made certain that she was asleep, he descended to his room and read the second letter:—

DARLING JIM,—Father never cared for me. If I died to-morrow he would forget me in a week. Luckily I have you, but he will expect me to choose between him and you. The great overwhelming surprise of his life will be when he discovers that I have chosen you, because, incredible as it may seem, he believes that he has done his duty by me just as he believed that he did his duty by my dear mother. He will never, *never* know how he appears to others.—Your ever loving POSY.

Quinney replaced the letter, went into the dining-room, and drank a glass of brown sherry. He preferred brown sherry because it exhibited the exact tint of faded mahogany, the tint so baffling to fakers of old furniture. As he sipped his wine he told himself that the girl was a liar. He had done his duty by her and by his dead wife. He had denied them nothing, gratified their whims, exalted each high above the station in which they had been born. Then he went to bed, to pass another wretched night, comparing himself to Lear and other fathers who had begotten thankless children.

Posy expressed concern at his appearance next morning. He was yellow as a guinea, and his eyes were congested.

"There's nothing the matter with *me*," he growled.

His emphasis on the personal pronoun reminded Posy that her father had made no claims upon her as ministering angel. He had never been ill, never "sorry for himself," to use that familiar expression in a new and significant sense. To-day he looked very sorry for himself. She said so, tentatively.

"I *am* sorry for myself," he declared.

He went out and walked in the Park, smoking his pipe and muttering to himself: "I'll dish the dog. Before sunset he'll be wishing he'd never been born. Good as I've been to both of 'em! Best father as ever lived, I do believe." Half an hour passed in computing what Posy had cost him. Fifteen hundred pounds in hard cash. The same sum invested, say, in old Irish glass would have trebled itself. Yes, by gum! Posy represented a snug five thousand, the baggage!

When he returned to his house he was ripe for battle, thirsting for it. Three clients were waiting impatiently. He "socked" it to them. Asked big prices and got them, a salve to abraded pride. James Migott was much impressed.

"Nobody like you, sir, to sell stuff," he ventured to remark.

Quinney snarled back:—

"Yes, my lad, even if I do say it, there ain't my equal in London—that means the world. Best o' fathers I been, ain't I?"

James nodded.

"Done my duty. That's a thought to stick to one's ribs—hay?"

"Yes, sir."

"Never can remember the day when I couldn't say that. Square, too, I've been within reasonable bounds, though I have made ignorance—as just now—pay for my knowledge. I know a lot, my lad—more'n you think for."

"Yes, sir," said James.

That morning the staff had a sultry time

"'THERE'S NOTHING THE MATTER WITH ME,' HE GROWLED."

of it. Everybody agreed that the governor's tongue had an edge to it keener than the east wind, which happened to be blowing bitterly. Posy, at the piano, was surprised to find her sire standing beside her, with a malicious grin upon his thin face.

"Can you cook?" he asked.

"Cook? Me? You know I can't cook, father."

"Not much of a hand with your needle either, are ye?"

"No."

"Um! They tell me that our Royal Princesses have to learn such things, willy-nilly, because revolutions do happen—sometimes."

Posy stared at him, thinking to herself: "His liver is out of whack, and no mistake."

Quinney returned to his sanctuary, feeling that he was in form. The affair should be handled to rights.

"I'll fix 'em," he growled. "I'll sweep the cobwebs out o' their silly noddles, by gum I will!"

At lunch he harped back to the primitive duties of women, rubbing in his words and salting them properly.

"Look ye here, my girl. It's just struck me that I've been to blame in makin' you so bloomin' ornamental."

"Come, father, I didn't get my good looks from you."

"Handsome is as handsome does. Ever heard that?"

"Once or twice."

Quinney grinned as he drank his second

glass of brown sherry. Very rarely did he exceed one glass of wine in the middle of the day. Then he lit his cigar and settled himself in an easy-chair near the fire. Posy went upstairs, singing softly as she went.

"Chock-full o' deceit that girl is! Oozin' from every pore. Stamps upstairs singin' like a lark, crawls down like a viper. Oh, my Lord!"

He looked at his watch. By his reckoning Posy was nearly due in the sanctuary. James was whistling in the basement.

"Whistle away, you dog!" he muttered. "I'm agoing to call the next tune."

He had not long to wait. Posy came downstairs, entered the sanctuary, opened the lacquer cabinet, and was grasping Jim's letter, when Quinney, who had approached noiselessly from behind, tapped her on the shoulder.

"What are you up to, my girl?"

"I was just having a look at the inside of the cabinet. Thought of rubbing it over."

"Did you? What you got in your hand there? Paper?"

"It's something b-belonging to m-me," stammered the unhappy maid.

"What's in that cabinet belongs to me, my girl. Hand it over."

Posy slipped the letter into the bosom of her gown, and stared defiantly at her father.

"Sure it's yours?" he asked.

"Quite sure; a private affair."

"Keep your private papers in my cabinet—hay?"

"Sometimes."

Posy was now more at her ease, much to Quinney's delight. The higher the baggage mounted the farther she would have to fall.

"Wait a moment, my girl."

He walked to the foot of the staircase and called out: "James Migott!"

A distant voice replied:—

"Yes, sir."

"Come you up here, my lad. Quick!"

James appeared, rather flushed. His colour deepened when he saw Posy standing close to the pillar-box.

"Like to take it sittin' or standin'?" inquired Quinney, with marked politeness.

"Take what?" inquired Posy.

"The dose I'm goin' to give ye. I prefer to stand. You ain't fit, not by a long chalk, to sit on such chairs, but I've always been a considerate man."

James and Posy stood where they were. Posy was very pale, and her pretty fingers trembled.

Quinney glared at them, and the peroration he had prepared vanished to the limbo of unspoken speeches. He said, savagely:—

"Fallen in love with each other—hay?"

"Yes," replied Posy, without a moment's hesitation. James said, with commendable promptness: "Same here."

"A pretty couple you make, by gum! Intentions honourable?" he hissed at James.

Posy tossed her head. James answered, politely:—

"Quite."

"Arranged the happy day yet?" sneered the enraged Quinney.

"Not yet, sir."

"Ah! Waitin', maybe, for my blessing?"

Posy burst out impetuously:—

"Father, I love him."

"That dog!"

"Easy, sir. I've served you like a dog because I love her."

At this the brazen pair smiled at each other. Quinney's rage, so long restrained, rose to boiling point.

"Ain't I been a good father to you?" he asked Posy. "No quibblin'; let's have the God's truth! Ain't I been a good father to you?"

"No," said Posy.

"What you say?"

"I said 'No.'"

"Well, I'm blest! Ain't I given you everything a girl wants?"

"No."

"That puts the lid on. Of all the shameless, ungrateful hussies! Five thousand pounds you've cost me, miss. Not a penny less, by gum! Now, you answer straight. It'd take you a month o' Sundays to tell what I have given you; but you tell me what I've *not* given you?"

"Love."

"Eh?"

"You don't love me; you never have loved me. You love things." She waved an all-embracing arm. "Old chairs, faded tapestries, cracked china. You don't love, you can't love, persons."

"Say that again. I want it to soak in."

She said it again, with amazing calmness. Quinney, too confounded to deal adequately with her, turned to James.

"Do you love persons too?"

"That's right."

"Things worth their weight in gold don't interest you—hay?"

"They interest me, but I don't love them."

"Never occurred to you, did it, that these *things* would belong to my girl some day?"

"It may have occurred to me, but I didn't

fall in love with Posy because she was your daughter."

"Oh, really? You'd take her as she stands —hay?"

"Yes."

"How do you propose to support her?"

"That's easy answered. Old Cohen wants me. You pay me three pounds a week. I'm worth ten pounds, and Cohen is willing to give six pounds, not to mention a small commission on sales and purchases."

Quinney sat down, gasping. He, the most acute valuer of his generation, had never appraised these two. He had always considered that James was overpaid. Old Cohen must be mad. Trembling and perspiring, he played his trump card.

"'YOU CAN HAVE HER,' HE SHOUTED. 'TAKE HER NOW—AND GO!'"

"You can have her," he shouted. "Take her now—and go!"

Posy faltered: "Father, you don't mean it?"

"Yes, I do. Let him take you away if he wants you as you are."

He was certain that James would "back

down," and that a great victory was impending. But James replied, without hesitation:—

"Come, Posy! My mother will be delighted to see you. I'll get a special licence this afternoon."

The girl held up her head proudly. It is barely possible that till this moment she had never been absolutely sure of James. She beamed upon him.

"Oh, Jim," she exclaimed, fervently, "you are a darling!"

She flung herself into his outstretched arms, and they kissed each other, quite regardless of Mr. Quinney. He stared about him, bewildered. Then he said, gaspingly:—

"What would your pore mother have said?"

Posy released herself and approached her father. Pity shone softly in her eyes as she asked, gently:—

"Do you want to know what mother would have said?"

"I'm glad she was spared this, pore soul!" ejaculated the bereaved man. "God, in His mercy, took her in time."

"Do you want to know what mother would have said?"

She repeated the question in a deeper, more impressive tone.

"What do you mean?"

"Wait!"

She fled upstairs. During her absence Quinney wondered how he would replace James Migott, whom he had trained so diligently from tender years. The dog knew so much that only time and patience and experience could impart. He had always intended to offer James a very small share in the business.

Posy appeared breathless, and carrying a sheet of paper in her hand.

"Read that, father." As he fumbled for his spectacles, she said, softly, "May I read it aloud?"

"I don't care what you do."

But in his heart he knew that this was a lie. He did care. The conviction stole upon him that they had "bested" him. He wanted Posy with something of the hunger which seized him when he went to the Gold Room of the British Museum and beheld the incomparable Portland Vase, priceless though broken. Then he heard Posy's voice, and it struck him for the first time that it was like her mother's. The similarity of form and feature also was startling. He grew pale and tremulous, for it seemed as if his wife had come back from the dead. When he closed his eyes he could imagine that she was speaking.

MY DARLING LITTLE GIRL,—When you read this I shall be dead. I want to tell you before I go something about your father, which may save you much unhappiness. He loved me dearly once, and he used to tell me so. And then he grew more and more absorbed in his business, and now he is so wrapped up in it that I greatly fear he may infect you, and that, like him, you may come to believe that the beauty of the world is to be found in sticks and stones. To me they are just that—sticks and stones. And so, when the time comes for you to marry, be sure that you choose a man who loves you for yourself and whom you love for himself. I was so happy with your father when we lived in a cottage in Salisbury; I have been so unhappy in this great house filled with the things that have come between him and me.

My old servant will deliver this letter to you when you are seventeen. Read it sometimes, and keep it safe, for it is all that I have to leave you.—Your loving MOTHER.

Before she had reached the end Quinney had covered his face with his hands. When Posy's soft voice died away he made no sign. She believed then that his heart was dead indeed. James signed to her to come with him, but she gazed sorrowfully at her father, with the tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Good-bye," she faltered. "You don't want me, and James does."

Quinney lifted his head and sprang to his feet. The force of character which had made him pre-eminent in his business thrilled in his voice as he said, authoritatively:—

"I do want you. And I want James. I—I—I've always held on tight to the best, and I shall hold on to you." Then his voice failed as they stared at him, hardly realizing what he meant.

"Give me your mother's letter and leave me."

They went out, closing the door. Quinney read the letter through and gazed at the things which had come between him and the writer. Then he placed the letter in the lacquer cabinet, locked it, and slipped the key into his pocket. His face worked strangely as he tried to keep back the tears which were softening his heart.

He muttered brokenly:—

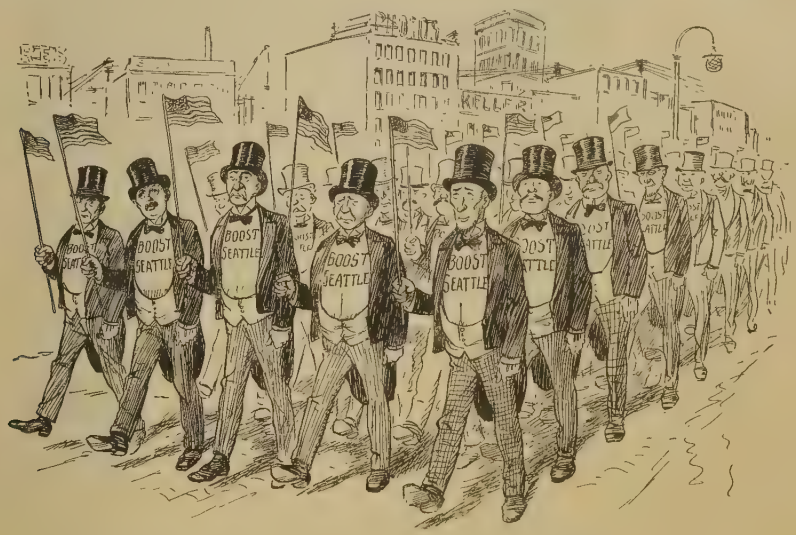
"I wonder whether the pore dear soul knows?"

Boosters and Boosting.

[The following article, by a writer who is intimately conversant with the subject, describes the humours and marvels of town advertising as it is practised in America. As some of the methods already show signs of being adopted in this country, it may be as well for our readers to be prepared for a campaign of British "boosters."]

By ARTHUR T. DOLLING.

EVERYONE knows what a boom is, as applied to a town. Charles Dickens described it seventy years ago in the "city" of Eden, although the actual word had not then been coined. But for a long time — indeed, until lately — things were managed very unscientifically. The art of booming was a most one-sided affair, chiefly worked by the real estate owners or agents. "Cities" so made — arising in a single night—showed a lamentable tendency to "bust up" or "move on." There was an absence of local pride, which is such a conspicuous feature of the new order of things—the order of the "boosters."



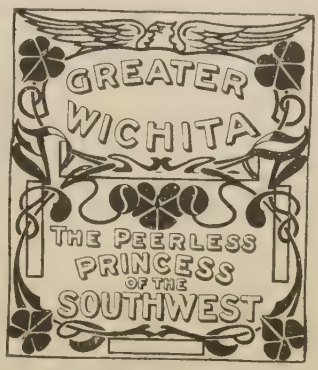
A BOOSTERS' SHIRT-FRONT PARADE IN SEATTLE.

"Boost" is a common American term meaning to "push upward." In 1898 the first Boosters' Club was formed at Spokane, Washington, for the purpose of boosting Spokane into the place which through its natural resources and attractions it deserved. The club, which comprised practically the whole population of the town, drew up rules in which every soul pledged himself to regard Spokane for conversational and advertising purposes "as the centre of these United States and God Almighty's creation, and never to let a day pass without having done something in word or deed to boost this town."

Of course, this spirit of local patriotism is not new. It has long been associated, for example, with our own Peebles, which a Peebles man does not hesitate to compare with Paris, greatly to Peebles's advantage. But the organization is new. Booster clubs began to spring up all over the West. They spread to the East, to the North, and to the South, and now the prevailing sentiment has grown so local as to find expression in the phrase, "Cuss America; give me Oshkosh." Americans who formerly went about with the American flag in their hats and the American eagle in their button-holes have now substituted photographic views of their own towns or local emblems, in default of regularly-granted municipal coats-of-arms. Even this last want is to be supplied, as will be related hereafter.

A year ago, when it seemed possible that

the great Panama Canal Exhibition of 1912 might go to New Orleans, the San Francisco boosters got to work in earnest to prevent such a calamity. One of the things they organized was a plug-hat-and-shirt-front parade. If such a festival were announced to take place in Manchester or Birmingham it would cause much mystification. Everybody out West understands and appreciates it at once. Of course, they were not real hats or shirt-fronts, but strips of cardboard, circular and flat, the one to be adjusted around the crown of an ordinary hat and the other to be worn on the chest, each inscribed in terrific red letters with the name of the town to be boosted, as, "Boost Seattle!" Imagine a procession of thousands of able-bodied citizens marching along by torchlight, with their knightly mottoes, for which they would dare and do and die, vividly inscribed on their persons, striding forth dauntlessly and roaring at the tops of their voices!



A BOOSTING POSTER FROM WICHITA (KANSAS).

"Do you believe," asks the prospectus of the Seattle Boosters' Club, "that Seattle is the best and most beautiful, the most elegant and most enterprising, the most cultured and most convenient, the most honourable and happiest city in the universe?

"Then Boost Seattle!

"Do you believe it could be made so?

"Then Boost Seattle!

"Are you ashamed of your town?

"Then Boost Seattle!"

Or here is another effort:—

"A small town is a mean town;
A mean town is a cussed town;
A cussed town is no good.
Boost Placerville!"

The boosting spirit of Tacoma carries the idea further:—

"Boost Tacoma!
Boost Tacoma night and day!
Boost Tacoma when you travel!
Boost Tacoma in your letters East!
Put your whole soul into it!
Boost Tacoma!"

A TACOMA BUTTON.

Boosting now forms part, and often the principal part, of the labours of perhaps a majority of the towns of over fifteen thousand inhabitants in the West. The first step in town boosting is to form a committee, which may be called a Chamber of Commerce, a Publicity Association, or even such an undignified title as "The League of Wichita Boosters." It does not matter what it is called—the objects are the same, and the methods only differ in degree.

Every business man in the town will be required to subscribe, say, one pound for a badge of membership. The badges are of original designs, with mottoes and catch phrases, and on a particular day a committee of ladies will seize upon all the men and insist on their purchasing badges.

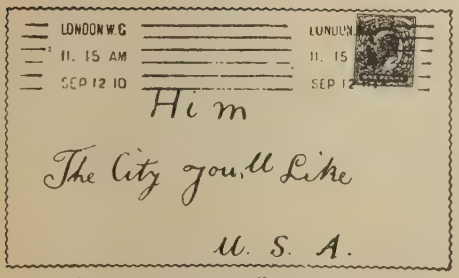
Shirt-front parades have been adopted elsewhere, but a shirt-sleeve parade is Winnipeg's own. Stung by the taunts of other and more southerly cities, the Bull's-Eye of the West, as Winnipeg calls itself, in order to prove the possibilities of its own salubrious climate, got up a New Year's Day procession in which all coats and jackets were dispensed with by the "processers." The next day the following telegraphic despatch appeared in many of the American newspapers:—

"In order to dispel the illusion that Winnipeg is a suburb of the North Pole and too frigid in winter for comfort, a demonstration was held here to-day, in which all the participants took part in their shirt-sleeves."

Whereupon a Chicago editor telegraphed, "Please send full list of casualties." In this connection it may be mentioned that it was the Montreal boosters who vetoed the famous ice-palace and winter sports carnival, using the memorable phrase, "Ice and boosting don't mix."

Here is a reproduction of Tacoma's button. As to badges, prizes are offered for the most telling device to symbolize the city, and some of them are already showing signs of adopting the city arms of old-world heraldry, although the Tombstone (Arkansas) *Epitaph's* suggestion for Guthrie, of "A skunk rampant fighting a wild-cat over a hill of beans argent," is not likely to be adopted.

Most towns "on the boost" have a watchword. Many use "Watch Us Grow!" but Tacoma has a special one, "You'll Like Tacoma!" Others are "Busy Portland," "Peerless Wichita," and "What's the Matter with ——?" the blank being understood to be Oklahoma.



"YOU'LL LIKE TACOMA" IS A PHRASE OF WORLD-WIDE POPULARITY.

As an illustration of how these phrases catch on, a letter was sent last autumn from England, bearing the postal address :—

"The City You'll Like,
U.S.A.,"

and was duly delivered in Tacoma.

Not long ago there was a monster gathering at Denver, comprising thousands of delegates from all the cities of the West. The proceedings were opened by prayer, and in the midst of the solemn silence with which the preacher concluded a thousand men arose at a given signal and bawled in stentorian tones :—

"OK-LA-HO-MA CITY !
Sixty-four thousand two hundred and five !"
What's the matter with Oklahoma ? "

This, considering the exploit was telegraphed all over the country, was held to have been a great feat of boosting on the part of the Oklahoma contingent ; and so, when the time next came for a great inter-State congress, Omaha determined not to be caught napping. But, although their organization was perfect, they had reckoned without their host, for the divine was a Pueblo man, and at the close of his exhortation he cried out : "And now, O Lord, Thy especial blessing is asked for the large and important city of Pueblo, whose population this year is sixty-six thousand seven hundred and twenty-three souls. Watch us and help us grow. Amen."

The roar of the Omaha men, chiefly of rage and disappointment, sounded rather feeble after that singular outburst, and Pueblo was held to have scored.

Pueblo's ambition is to become the Pittsburg of the West. Hence the local motto, "Watch Our Smoke." This town has sent out a cowboy band of fifty-two performers to travel all over the States, with banners and advertising material. Only the other day Pueblo managed to capture the Wichita baseball team. There seems to have been some delay at Wichita in finding money to renew the contract. The Pueblo agent was waiting —made terms with the players, and the next day they left for Pueblo. This is all part of the boosting scheme.

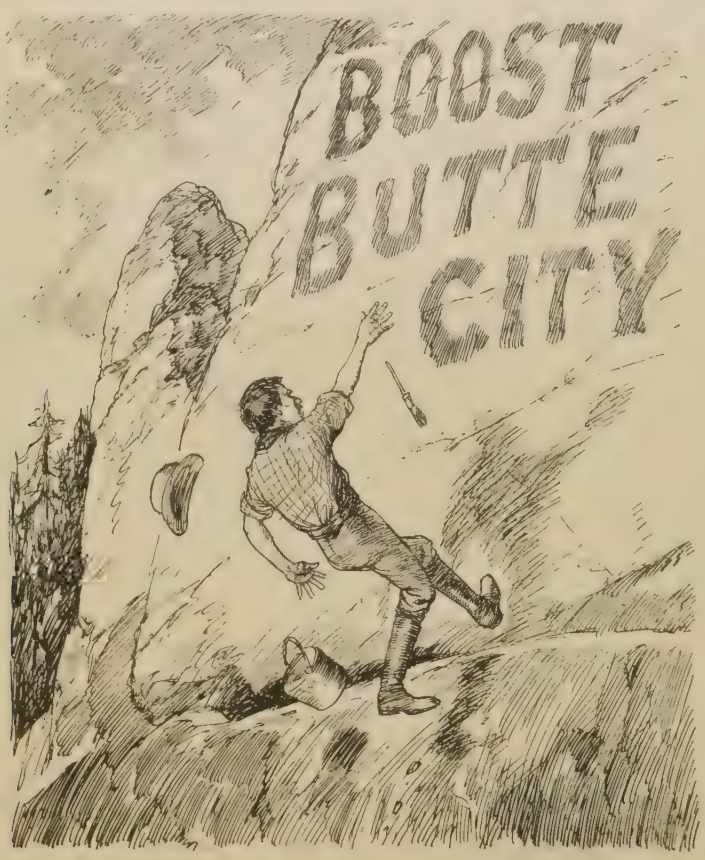
On the whole, boosting may be said to be regarded as a kind of game combined with business in America, and very few, if any, are really ill-humoured about it. Roars of laughter go up amongst millions of people when any especially audacious point is made. The proprietor of a paint factory established at Tacoma offered an ingenious scheme to the boosters. Red paint was to be given gratis, or at a merely nominal price, to enthusiastic citizens of Tacoma, who were to go about the country and inscribe "Boost Tacoma," "Tacoma, the Emporium of the Earth," and other appropriate legends on all the available and accessible spots they could find. For a time the plan met with great success,

FREE PAINT FOR COVERING ALL DEAD WALLS WITH TACOMA'S FAME.

especially in the hands of the juvenile part of the community, until one fine day the amateur sign-painters inscribed "Tacoma" on the hides of a herd of cattle belonging to a Spokane man, who promptly brought an action, and caused a marked decline of zeal in this direction.

But signs and sign-boards advertising 'Butte City' on his lips that he was ushered into the presence of his Maker."

The Omaha journalistic comment on this is hardly quotable, but it concludes: "No doubt the ejaculation of this foolhardy youth was called forth by a sudden glimpse, as in a vision, of his future place of residence in the smoky depths below."



AN AUDACIOUS BOOSTER WHO EXPIRED WITH "BUTTE CITY" ON HIS LIPS.

towns are a prominent feature of the scenery of the West. "Delightful Denver" is written not only on Pike's Peak, but on the summit of Mount Buckskin, more than four thousand feet above sea-level. Last year the Montana capital reached the fifty-thousand mark, and promptly an enthusiastic tourist from Butte City set out to proclaim the fact on the highest walls of the famous Cheyenne Canyon. Unluckily, he lost his balance, and the rest of the story may best be told in the words of a Butte City newspaper: "His horrified companions below saw him reel and totter; but even in that supreme moment, when this brave citizen was about to take his plunge into eternity, it was with the name

Speaking of journalism and the high-falutin language with which the local boosting process is fostered, a whole entertaining article could be filled with extracts. Here is one:—

"COME TO SALT LAKE CITY!

"Is there anything that can stop us?

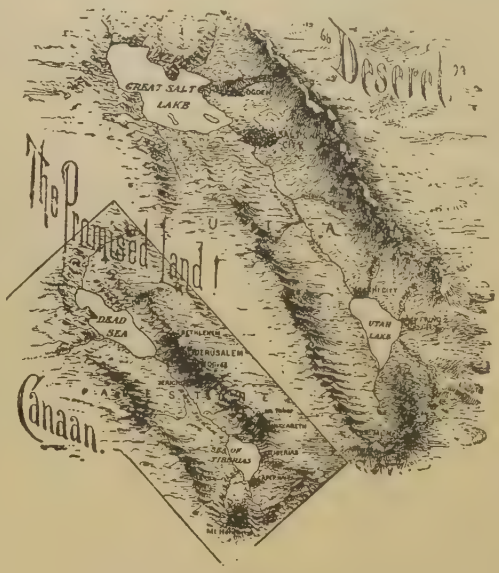
"Nevada is unfolding west of us, and all the tributary region around us is developing; the American spirit has entered the lands beyond the sea; and because of it there will soon be five ships upon the Pacific for every one that rides there now. Great trans-continental traffic will result, and along the main line of it, with railroads diverging in every direction, will be Salt Lake City, now

the most beautiful; hereafter not only the most beautiful, but one of the most important of the interior cities of the United States. It is decreed!"

Why is Salt Lake City the Promised Land—the modern Canaan? Not because of its religion—no, not altogether; but because of its astonishing resemblance to the Holy Land. It is an almost exact counterpart, as poster after poster informs you, and the City of the Elders is Jerusalem the Golden.

One must not forget other boosting methods. Sometimes the tourist is startled by seeing a whole train bearing enormous labels steaming slowly through rival towns green with envy:—

"This train contains more population for Portland. 1910, 207,214."



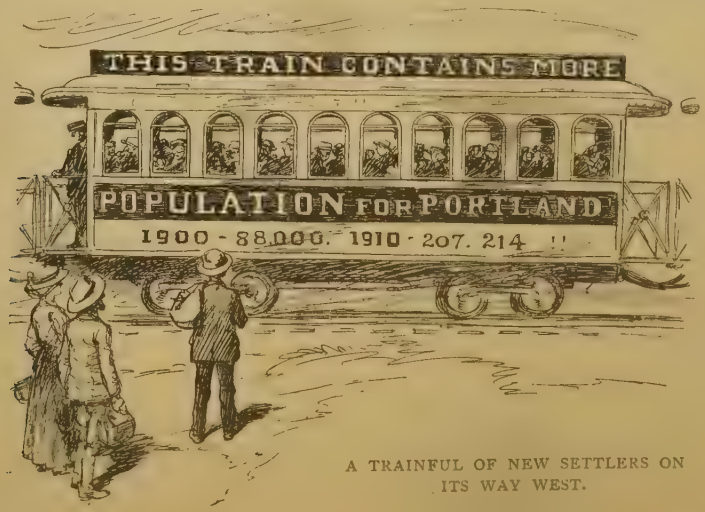
THE NEW LAND OF CANAAN, SALT LAKE CITY, AND PALESTINE ON THE MAP.

Or "These cars are filled with folks coming to live in Seattle, the Little Wonder of Washington. We are IT!"

It was Tacoma that dispatched apples all over the East wrapped in tissue paper with the inscription: "This is from Tacoma. So are you—a long way from. Come nearer. You'll like Tacoma." Another read: "Small but sweet. Babies grow bigger. Come and join us."

Spokane has an apple-fair each year to advertise its apple-growing. The apples are taken, free of all charge, to Boston and exhibited there, and then to various other towns. Portland (Oregon) has a Festival of Roses, the streets being decorated with roses, an idea which was copied in Vienna recently.

They tell a story in the West of four professed—perhaps professional—boosters who met in Kansas City and began boosting their own towns. One hailed from Pueblo, one from Santa Fé, one from Guthrie, and one from Wichita. From boosting—or "boasting," as it should, perhaps, be written—they proceeded to argument. The argument waxed warm, and then hot. They adjourned to a saloon to cool off, apparently without success, for in the morning the Pueblo man was found outside, shot; the booster from Wichita had his skull fractured; the Guthrie man was dead drunk; and the Santa Fé enthusiast was roped together into a parcel labelled, "Freight to Guthrie. New Settler. With care."



A TRAINFUL OF NEW SETTLERS ON ITS WAY WEST.

Three From Dunsterville.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Joseph Simpson, R.B.A.

ONCE upon a time there was erected in Longacre Square, New York, a large white statue, labelled "Our City," the figure of a woman in Grecian robes, holding aloft a shield. Critical citizens objected to it for various reasons, but its real fault was that its symbolism was faulty. The sculptor should have represented New York as a conjurer in evening dress, smiling blandly as he changed a rabbit into a bowl of goldfish. For that, above all else, is New York's speciality. It changes.

Between May 1st, when she stepped off the train, and May 16th, when she received Eddy Moore's letter containing the information that he had found her a post as stenographer in the office of Joe Rendal, it had changed Mary Hill quite remarkably.

Mary was from Dunsterville, which is in Canada. Emigrations from Dunsterville were rare. It is a somnolent town; and, as a rule, young men born there follow in their father's footsteps, working on the paternal farm or helping in the paternal store. Occasionally a daring spirit will break away, but seldom farther than Montreal. Two only of the younger generation, Joe Rendal and Eddy Moore, had set out to make their fortunes in New York; and both, despite the gloomy prophecies of the village sages, had prospered.

Mary, third and last emigrant, did not aspire to such heights! All she demanded from New York for the present was that it should pay her a living wage, and to that end, having studied by stealth typewriting and shorthand, she had taken the plunge, thrilling with excitement and the romance of things; and New York had looked at her, raised its eyebrows, and looked away again. If every city has a voice, New York's at that moment had said "Huh!" This had damped Mary. She saw that there were going to be obstacles. For one thing, she had depended so greatly on Eddy Moore, and he had failed her. Three years before, at a church festival, he had stated specifically that he would die for her. Perhaps he was still willing to do that—she had not inquired—but, at any rate, he did not see his way to employing her as a secretary. He had been very nice about it. He had smiled kindly, taken her address, and said he would do what he could, and had then hurried off to meet a man at lunch. But he had not given her a position. And as the days went by and she found no employment, and her little stock of money dwindled, and no word came from Eddy, New York got to work and changed her outlook on things wonderfully. What had seemed romantic became merely frightening. What had been exciting gave her a feeling of dazed helplessness.

But it was not until Eddy's letter came that she realized the completeness of the change. On May 1st she would have thanked Eddy politely for his trouble, adding, however, that she would really prefer not to meet poor Joe again. On May 16th she welcomed him as something Heaven-sent. The fact that she was to be employed outweighted a thousandfold the fact that her employer was to be Joe.

It was not that she disliked Joe. She was sorry for him.

She remembered Joe, a silent, shambling youth, all hands, feet, and shyness, who had spent most of his spare time twisting his fingers and staring adoringly at her from afar. The opinion of those in the social whirl of Dunsterville had been that it was his hopeless passion for her that had made him fly to New York. It would be embarrassing meeting him again. It would require tact to discourage his silent worshipping without wounding him more deeply. She hated hurting people.

But, even at the cost of that, she must accept the post. To refuse meant ignominious retreat to Dunsterville, and from that her pride revolted. She must revisit Dunsterville in triumph or not at all.

"STARING ADORINGLY AT HER FROM AFAR."

Joe Rendal's office was in the heart of the financial district, situated about halfway up a building that, to Mary, reared amidst the less impressive architecture of her home-town, seemed to reach nearly to the sky. A proud-looking office-boy, apparently baffled and mortified by the information that she had an appointment, took her name, and she sat down, filled with a fine mixed assortment of emotions, to wait.

For the first time since her arrival in New York she felt almost easy in her mind. New York, with its shoving, jostling, hurrying crowds; a giant fowl-run, full of human fowls scurrying to and fro; clucking, ever on the look-out for some desired morsel, and ever ready to swoop down and snatch it from its temporary possessor, had numbed her. But now she felt a slackening of the strain. New York might be too much for her, but she could cope with Joe.

The haughty boy returned. Mr. Rendal was disengaged. She rose and went into an inner room, where a big man was seated at a desk.

It was Joe. There was no doubt about that. But it was not the Joe she remembered, he of the twisted fingers and silent stare. In his case, too, New York had conjured effectively. He was better-looking, better-dressed, improved in every respect. In the old days one had noticed the hands and feet and deduced the presence of Joe somewhere in the background. Now they were merely adjuncts. It was with a rush of indignation that Mary found herself feeling bucolic and awkward. Awkward with Joe! It was an outrage.

His manner heightened the feeling. If he had given the least sign of embarrassment she might have softened towards him. He showed no embarrassment whatever. He was very much at his ease. He was cheerful. He was even flippant.

"Welcome to our beautiful little city," he said.

Mary was filled with a helpless anger. What right had he to ignore the past in this way, to behave as if her presence had never reduced him to pulp?

"Won't you sit down?" he went on. "It's splendid, seeing you again, Mary. You're looking very well. How long have you been in New York? Eddy tells me you want to get taken on as a secretary. As it happens, there is a vacancy for just that in this office. A big, wide vacancy, left by a lady who departed yesterday in a shower of burning words and hairpins. She said she would never return, and, between ourselves, that was the right guess. Would you mind letting me see what you can do? Will you take this letter down?"

Certainly there was something compelling about this new Joe. Mary took the pencil and pad which he offered—and she took them meekly. Until this moment she had always been astonished by the reports which filtered through to Dunsterville of his success in the big city. Of course, nobody had ever doubted his perseverance; but it takes something more than perseverance to fight New York fairly and squarely and win. And Joe had that something. He had force. He was sure of himself.

"Read it, please," he said, when he had finished dictating. "Yes, that's all right. You'll do."

For a moment Mary was on the point of refusing. A mad desire gripped her to assert herself, to make plain her resentment at this revolt of the serf. Then she thought of those scuttling, clucking crowds, and her heart failed her.

"Thank you," she said, in a small voice.

As she spoke the door opened.

"Well, well, well!" said Joe. "Here we all are! Come in, Eddy. Mary has just been showing me what she can do."

If time had done much for Joe, it had done more for his fellow-emigrant, Eddy Moore. He had always been good-looking and—according to local standards—presentable. Tall, slim, with dark eyes that made you catch your breath when they looked into yours, and a ready flow of speech, he had been Dunsterville's prize exhibit. And here he was with all his excellence heightened and accentuated by the polish of the city. He had filled out. His clothes were wonderful. And his voice, when he spoke, had just that same musical quality.

"So you and Joe have fixed it up? Capital! Shall we all go and lunch somewhere?"

"Got an appointment," said Joe. "I'm late already. Be here at two sharp, Mary." He took up his hat and went out.

The effect of Eddy's suavity had been to make Mary forget the position in which she now stood to Joe. Eddy had created for the moment quite an old-time atmosphere of good-fellowship. She hated Joe for shattering this and reminding her that she was his employée. Her quick flush was not lost on Eddy.

"Dear old Joe is a little abrupt sometimes," he said. "But——"

"He's a pig!" said Mary, defiantly.

"But you mustn't mind it. New York makes men like that."

"It hasn't made you—not to me, at any rate. Oh, Eddy," she cried, impulsively, "I'm frightened. I wish I had never come here. You're the only thing in this whole city that isn't hateful."

"Poor little girl!" he said. "Never mind. Let me take you and give you some lunch. Come along."

Eddy was soothing. There was no doubt of that. He stayed her with minced chicken and comforted her with soft-shelled crab. His voice was a lullaby, lulling her Joe-harassed nerves to rest.

They discussed the dear old days. A carper might have said that Eddy was the least bit vague on the subject of the dear old days. A carper might have pointed out that the discussion of the dear old days, when you came to analyze it, was practically a monologue on Mary's part, punctuated with musical "Yes, yes's" from her companion. But who cares what carpers think? Mary herself had no fault to find. In the roar of New York Dunsterville had suddenly become very dear to her, and she found in Eddy a sympathetic soul to whom she could open her heart.

"Do you remember the old school, Eddy, and how you and I used to walk there together, you carrying my dinner-basket and helping me over the fences?"

"Yes, yes."

"And we'd gather hickory-nuts and persimmons?"

"Persimmons, yes," murmured Eddy.

"Do you remember the prizes the teacher gave the one who got best marks in the spelling class? And the treats at Christmas, when we all got twelve sticks of striped peppermint candy? And drawing the water out of the well in that old wooden bucket

in the winter, and pouring it out in the playground and skating on it when it froze? And wasn't it cold in the winter, too! Do you remember the stove in the schoolroom? How we used to crowd round it!"

"The stove, yes," said Eddy, dreamily. "Ah, yes, the stove. Yes, yes. Those were dear old days!"

Mary leaned her elbows on the table and her chin on her hands, and looked across at him with sparkling eyes.

"Oh, Eddy," she said, "you don't know how nice it is to meet someone who remembers all about those old times! I felt a hundred million miles from Dunsterville before I saw you, and I was homesick. But now it's all different."

"Poor little Mary!"

"Do you remember——?"

He glanced at his watch with some haste.

"It's two o'clock," he said. "I think we should be going."

Mary's face fell.

"Back to that pig Joe! I hate him. And I'll show him that I do!"

Eddy looked almost alarmed.

"I—I shouldn't do that," he said. "I don't think I should do that. It's only his manner at first. You'll get to like him better. He's an awfully good fellow really, Joe. And if you—er—quarrelled with him you might find it hard—what I mean is, it's not so easy to pick up jobs in New York. I shouldn't like to think of you, Mary," he added, tenderly, "hunting for a job—tired—perhaps hungry——"

Mary's eyes filled with tears.

"How good you are, Eddy!" she said. "And I'm horrid, grumbling when I ought to be thanking you for getting me the place. I'll be nice to him—if I can—as nice as I can."

"That's right. Do try. And we shall be seeing quite a lot of each other. We must often lunch together."

Mary re-entered the office not without some trepidation. Two hours ago it would have seemed absurd to be frightened of Joe, but Eddy had brought it home to her again how completely she was dependent on her former serf's goodwill. And he had told her to be back at two sharp, and it was now nearly a quarter past.

The outer office was empty. She went on into the inner room.

She had speculated as she went on Joe's probable attitude. She had pictured him as annoyed, even rude. What she was not prepared for was to find him on all fours, grunting and rooting about in a pile of papers. She stopped short.

"What *are* you doing?" she gasped.

"I can't think what you meant," he said. "There must be some mistake. I'm not even a passable pig. I couldn't deceive a novice."

He rose, and dusted his knees.

"Yet you seemed absolutely certain in the restaurant just now. Did you notice that you were sitting near to a sort of jungle of potted palms? I was lunching immediately on the other side of the forest."

Mary drew herself up and fixed him with an eye that shone with rage and scorn.

"Eavesdropper!" she cried.

"Not guilty," he said, cheerfully. "I hadn't a notion that you were there till you shouted, 'That pig Joe, I hate him!' and almost directly afterwards I left."

"I did not shout."

"My dear girl, you cracked a wine-glass at my table. The man I was lunching with jumped clean out of his seat and swallowed his cigar. You ought to be more careful!"

Mary bit her lip.

"And now, I suppose, you are going to dismiss me?"

"Dismiss you? Not much. The thing has simply confirmed my high opinion of your qualifications. The ideal secretary must have two qualities: she must be able to sec. and she must think her employer a pig. You fill the bill. Would you mind taking down this letter?"

Life was very swift and stimulating for Mary during the early days of her professional career. The inner workings of a busy broker's office are always interesting to the stranger. She had never understood how business men made their money, and she did not understand now; but it did not take her long to see that if they were all like Joe Rendal they earned it. There were days of comparative calm. There were days that were busy. And there were days that packed into the space of a few hours the concentrated essence of a music-hall knock-about sketch, an earthquake, a football scrummage, and the rush-hour on the Tube; when the office was full of shouting men, when strange figures dived in and out and banged doors like characters in an old farce, and Harold, the proud office-boy, lost his air of being on the point of lunching with a duke at the club and perspired like one of the proletariat. On these occasions you could not help admiring Joe, even if you hated him. When a man is doing his own job well, it is impossible not to admire him. And Joe did

his job superlatively well. He was everywhere. Where others trotted, he sprang. Where others raised their voices, he yelled. Where others were in two places at once, he was in three and moving towards a fourth.

These upheavals had the effect on Mary of making her feel curiously linked to the firm. On ordinary days work was work, but on these occasions of storm and stress it was a fight, and she looked on every member of the little band grouped under the banner of J. Rendal as a brother-in-arms. For Joe, And to Joe, as an ordinary individual, she objected. There was an indefinable something in his manner which jarred on her. She came to the conclusion that it was principally his insufferable good-humour. If only he would lose his temper with her now and then, she felt he would be bearable. He lost it with others. Why not with her? Because, she told herself bitterly, he wanted to show her that she mattered so little to him that it was not worth while quarrelling with her; because he wanted to put her in the

"ON ALL FOURS, GRUNTING AND ROOTING ABOUT IN A PILE OF PAPERS."

while the battle raged, she would have done anything. Her resentment at being under his orders vanished completely. He was her captain, and she a mere unit in the firing-line. It was a privilege to do what she was told. And if the order came sharp and abrupt, that only meant that the fighting was fierce and that she was all the more fortunate in being in a position to be of service.

The reaction would come with the end of the fight. Her private hostilities began when the firm's ceased. She became an ordinary individual again, and so did Joe. wrong, to be superior. She had a perfect right to hate a man who treated her in that way.

She compared him, to his disadvantage, with Eddy. Eddy, during these days, continued to be more and more of a comfort. It rather surprised her that he found so much time to devote to her. When she had first called on him, on her arrival in the city, he had given her the impression—more, she admitted, by his manner than his words—that she was not wanted. He had shown no disposition to seek her company. But now he seemed

always to be on hand. To take her out to lunch appeared to be his chief hobby.

One afternoon Joe commented on it, with that air of suppressing an indulgent smile which Mary found so trying.

"I saw you and Eddy at Stephano's just now," he said, between sentences of a letter which he was dictating. "You're seeing a good deal of Eddy, aren't you?"

"Yes," said Mary. "He's very kind. He knows I'm lonely." She paused. "*He* hasn't forgotten the old days," she said, defiantly.

Joe nodded.

"Good old Eddy!" he said.

There was nothing in the words to make Mary fire up, but much in the way they were spoken, and she fired up accordingly.

"What do you mean?" she cried.

"Mean?" queried Joe.

"You're hinting at something. If you have anything to say against Eddy, why don't you say it straight out?"

"It's a good working rule in life never to say anything straight out. Speaking in parables, I will observe that, if America was a monarchy instead of a republic and people here had titles, Eddy would be a certainty for first Earl of Pearl Street."

Dignity fought with curiosity in Mary for a moment. The latter won.

"I don't know what you mean! Why Pearl Street?"

"Go and have a look at it."

Dignity recovered its ground. Mary tossed her head.

"We are wasting a great deal of time," she said, coldly. "Shall I take down the rest of this letter?"

"Great idea!" said Joe, indulgently. "Do."

A policeman, brooding on life in the neighbourhood of City Hall Park and Broadway that evening, awoke with a start from his meditations to find himself being addressed by a young lady. The young lady had large grey eyes and a slim figure. She appealed to the æsthetic taste of the policeman.

"Hold to me, lady," he said, with gallant alacrity. "I'll see yez acrost."

"Thank you, I don't want to cross," she said. "Officer!"

The policeman rather liked being called "Officer."

"Ma'am?" he beamed.

"Officer, do you know a street called Pearl Street?"

"I do that, ma'am."

She hesitated.

"What sort of street is it?"

The policeman searched in his mind for a neat definition.

"Darned crooked, miss," he said.

He then proceeded to point the way, but the lady had gone.

It was a bomb in a blue dress that Joe found waiting for him at the office next morning. He surveyed it in silence, then raised his hands above his head.

"Don't shoot," he said. "What's the matter?"

"What right had you to say that about Eddy? You know what I mean—about Pearl Street."

Joe laughed.

"Did you take a look at Pearl Street?"

Mary's anger blazed out.

"I didn't think you could be so mean and cowardly," she cried. "You ought to be ashamed to talk about people behind their backs, when—when—besides, if he's what you say, how did it happen that you engaged me on his recommendation?"

He looked at her for an instant without replying. "I'd have engaged you," he said, "on the recommendation of a syndicate of forgers and three-card-trick men."

He stood fingering a pile of papers on the desk.

"Eddy isn't the only person who remembers the old days, Mary," he said, slowly.

She looked at him, surprised. There was a note in his voice that she had not heard before. She was conscious of a curious embarrassment and a subtler feeling which she could not analyse. But before she could speak, Harold, the office-boy, entered the room with a card, and the conversation was swept away on a tidal wave of work.

Joe made no attempt to resume it. That morning happened to be one of the earthquake, knock-about-sketch mornings, and conversation, what there was of it, consisted of brief, strenuous remarks of a purely business nature.

But at intervals during the day Mary found herself returning to his words. Their effect on her mind puzzled her. It seemed to her that somehow they had caused things to alter their perspective. In some way Joe had become more human. She still refused to believe that Eddy was not all that was chivalrous and noble, but her anger against Joe for his insinuations had given way to a feeling of regret that he should have made them. She ceased to look on him as something wantonly malevolent, a Thersites

recklessly slandering his betters. She felt that there must have been a misunderstanding somewhere and was sorry for it.

Thinking it over, she made up her mind that it was for her to remove this misunderstanding. The days which followed strengthened the decision; for the improvement in Joe was steadily maintained. The indefinable something in his manner which had so irritated her had vanished. It had been, when it had existed, so nebulous that words were not needed to eliminate it. Indeed, even now she could not say exactly in what it had consisted. She only knew that the atmosphere had changed. Without word spoken on either side it seemed that peace had been established between them, and it amazed her what a difference it made. She was soothed and happy, and kindly disposed to all men, and every day felt more strongly the necessity of convincing Joe and Eddy of each other's merits, or, rather, of convincing Joe, for Eddy, she admitted, always spoke most generously of the other.

"THE POLICEMAN SEARCHED IN HIS MIND FOR A NEAT DEFINITION."

For a week Eddy did not appear at the office. On the eighth day, however, he rang her up on the telephone and invited her to lunch.

Later in the morning Joe happened to ask her out to lunch.

"I'm so sorry," said Mary; "I've just promised Eddy. He wants me to meet him at Stephano's, but——" She hesitated. "Why shouldn't we all lunch together?" she went on, impulsively.

She hurried on. This was her opening, but she felt nervous. The subject of Eddy had not come up between them since that memorable conversation a week before, and she was uncertain of her ground.

"I wish you liked Eddy, Joe," she said. "He's very fond of you, and it seems such a shame that—I mean—we're all from the old town, and—oh, I know I put it badly, but——"

"I think you put it very well," said Joe; "and if I could like a man to order I'd do it to oblige you. But—well, I'm not going to keep harping on it. Perhaps you'll see through Eddy yourself one of these days."

A sense of the hopelessness of her task oppressed Mary. She put on her hat without replying, and turned to go.

At the door some impulse caused her to glance back, and as she did so she met his eye, and stood staring. He was looking at her as she had so often seen him look three years before in Dunsterville—humbly, appealingly, hungrily.

He took a step forward. A sort of panic seized her. Her fingers were on the door-

handle. She turned it, and the next moment was outside.

She walked slowly down the street. She felt shaken. She had believed so thoroughly that his love for her had vanished with his shyness and awkwardness in the struggle for success in New York. His words, his manner —everything had pointed to that. And now —it was as if those three years had not been. Nothing had altered, unless it were—herself.

Had she altered? Her mind was in a whirl. This thing had affected her like some physical shock. The crowds and noises of the street bewildered her. If only she could get away from them and think quietly——

And then she heard her name spoken, and looked round, to see Eddy.

"Glad you could come," he said. "I've something I want to talk to you about. It'll be quiet at Stephano's."

She noticed, almost unconsciously, that he seemed nervous. He was unwontedly silent. She was glad of it. It helped her to think.

He gave the waiter an order and became silent again, drumming with his fingers on the cloth. He hardly spoke till the meal was over and the coffee was on the table. Then he leaned forward.

"Mary," he said, "we've always been pretty good friends, haven't we?"

His dark eyes were looking into hers. There was an expression in them that was strange to her. He smiled, but it seemed to Mary that there was effort behind the smile.

"Of course we have, Eddy," she said. He touched her hand.

"Dear little Mary!" he said, softly.

He paused for a moment.

"Mary," he went on, "you would like to do me a good turn? You would, wouldn't you, Mary?"

"Why, Eddy, of course!"

He touched her hand again. This time, somehow, the action grated on her. Before, it had seemed impulsive, a mere spontaneous evidence of friendship. Now there was a suggestion of artificiality, of calculation. She drew back a little in her chair. Deep down in her some watchful instinct had sounded an alarm. She was on guard.

He drew a quick breath.

"It's nothing much. Nothing at all. It's only this. I—I—Joe will be writing a letter to a man called Weston on Thursday—Thursday, remember. There won't be anything in it—nothing of importance—nothing private—but—I—I want you to mail me a copy of it, Mary. A—a copy of——"

She was looking at him open-eyed. Her face was white and shocked.

"For goodness' sake," he said, irritably, "don't look like that. I'm not asking you to commit murder. What's the matter with you? Look here, Mary; you'll admit you owe me something, I suppose? I'm the only man in New York that's ever done anything for you. Didn't I get you your job? Well, then, it's not as if I were asking you to do anything dangerous, or difficult, or——"

She tried to speak, but could not. He went on rapidly. He did not look at her. His eyes wandered past her, shifting restlessly.

"Look here," he said; "I'll be square with you. You're in New York to make money. Well, you aren't going to make it hammering a typewriter. I'm giving you your chance. I'm going to be square with you. Let me see that letter, and——"

His voice died away abruptly. The expression of his face changed. He smiled, and this time the effort was obvious.

"Halloa, Joe!" he said.

Mary turned. Joe was standing at her side. He looked very large and wholesome and restful.

"I don't want to intrude," he said; "but I wanted to see you, Eddy, and I thought I should catch you here. I wrote a letter to Jack Weston yesterday—after I got home from the office—and one to you; and somehow I managed to post them in the wrong envelopes. It doesn't matter much, because they both said the same thing."

"The same thing?"

"Yes; I told you I should be writing to you again on Thursday, to tip you something good that I was expecting from old Longwood. Jack Weston has just rung me up on the 'phone to say that he has got a letter that doesn't belong to him. I explained to him and thought I'd drop in here and explain to you. Why, what's your hurry, Eddy?"

Eddy had risen from his seat.

"I'm due back at the office," he said, hoarsely.

"Busy man! I'm having a slack day. Well, good-bye. I'll see Mary back."

Joe seated himself in the vacant chair.

"You're looking tired," he said. "Did Eddy talk too much?"

"Yes, he did. . . . Joe, you were right."

"Ah—Mary!" Joe chuckled. "I'll tell you something I didn't tell Eddy. It wasn't entirely through carelessness that I posted those letters in the wrong envelopes. In fact, to be absolutely frank, it wasn't through

carelessness at all. There's an old gentleman in Pittsburg by the name of John Longwood, who occasionally is good enough to inform me of some of his intended doings on the market a day or so before the rest of the world knows them, and Eddy has always shown a strong desire to get early information too. Do you remember my telling you that your predecessor at the office left a little abruptly? There was a reason. I engaged her as a confidential secretary, and she overdid it. She confided in Eddy. From the look on your face as I came in I gathered that he had just been proposing that you should perform a similar act of Christian charity. Had he?"

"'I'M DUE BACK AT THE OFFICE,' HE SAID, HOARSELY.

Mary clenched her hands.

"It's this awful New York!" she cried. "Eddy was never like that in Dunsterville."

"Dunsterville does not offer quite the same scope," said Joe.

"New York changes everything," Mary returned. "It has changed Eddy—it has changed you."

He bent towards her and lowered his voice.

"Not altogether," he said. "I'm just the same in one way. I've tried to pretend I had altered, but it's no use. I give it up. I'm still just the same poor fool who used to hang round staring at you in Dunsterville."

A waiter was approaching the table with the air, which waiters cultivate, of just happening by chance to be going in that direction. Joe leaned farther forward, speaking quickly.

"And for whom," he said, "you didn't care a single, solitary snap of your fingers, Mary."

She looked up at him. The waiter hovered, poising for his swoop. Suddenly she smiled.

"New York has changed me too, Joe," she said.

"Mary!" he cried.

"Ze pill, sare," observed the waiter.

Joe turned.

"Ze what!" he exclaimed. "Well, I'm hanged! Eddy's gone off and left me to pay for his lunch! That man's a wonder! When it comes to brain-work, he's in a class by himself." He paused. "But I have the luck," he said,

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

VIEWED BY SIR HENRY LUCY.

(NEW SERIES.)

Illustrated by E. T. Reed.

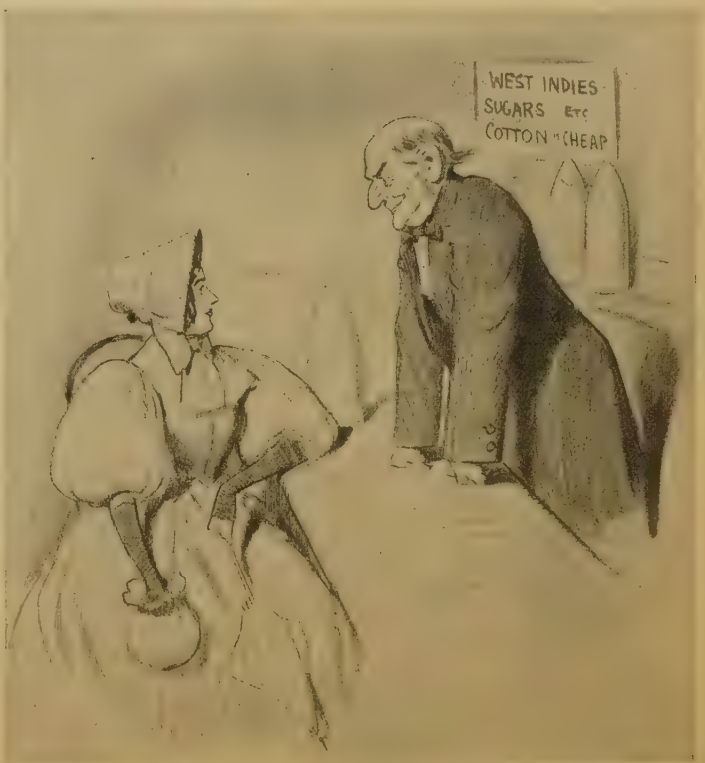
MINISTERIAL SACRIFICES.

BY a self-denying ordinance His Majesty's Ministers, whilst generously making provision of £400 a year by way of salary for their fellow-members, do not share in this twentieth-century demand on the public purse. They already have their salaries, in several cases inadequate to the magnitude of their public service and the sacrifice of pecuniary gain open to them in private practice. Mr. Gladstone's official income never exceeded £5,000 a year, and was intermitted by recurrent periods of Opposition. Needless to say, he never availed himself of the pension which lightens the lot of some other statesmen when temporarily or permanently out of office. Had he obeyed his earlier impulse and sought a career in the Church, he would inevitably have reached the Primacy, with its comfortable £15,000 a year. Had he followed family footsteps and devoted himself to commerce, there would have been no reasonable limit to his income. He was content with what, spread over the years of active service, was a mere pittance.

The late Sir William Harcourt provided an example even more striking of the pecuniary sacrifice men are willing to make for the chances and changes of political life. When, in 1868, he entered Parliament as member for the City of Oxford, he necessarily relinquished practice at the Parliamentary Bar, which brought him in an increasing income that had already reached the nice rotundity of £12,000 a year. He enjoyed considerable spells of office, but he never recaptured the average of lost gains.

LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.

With exceptional equanimity the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General may regard the Quarterly Pay Sheet of the House of Commons with lofty indifference. Whilst the Prime Minister's salary stands at £5,000 a year, the Attorney-General draws £7,000, and Mr. Solicitor-General £1,000 a year less. But that is not all. By a Treasury Minute dated



"HAD MR. GLADSTONE FOLLOWED THE FAMILY FOOTSTEPS AND DEVOTED HIMSELF TO COMMERCE, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO REASONABLE LIMIT TO HIS INCOME."

July 5th, 1895, it is set forth that this salary is to cover all work of whatever nature done by them as Law Officers for any department of Government, "except contentious business." To the learned gentlemen concerned, more blessed than Mesopotamia is the phrase "contentious business." The Minute sets forth that the term applies to (*a*) cases in which the head of a Government Department directs a Law Officer to be instructed; (*b*) cases in which the Solicitor to the Treasury or the solicitor of a Government Department thinks it desirable that a Law Officer should appear; (*c*) cases concerning prolongation of patents in the Privy Council; (*d*) informations on the Crown side and Customs cases; (*e*) cases in the Revenue Paper; and (*f*) cases in the Court of Appeal, House of Lords, and Privy Council.

If time and money were matters of moment in Downing Street it would seem that savings would be scored if, instead of setting forth particulars of what constitutes "contentious business," it were stated what services rendered by the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General do not come within that category.

As matters are arranged, the fixed salaries of the Law Officers are mere substrata upon which are built up incomes that must shock John Burns, who is understood still to retain belief in his famous axiom that a wage of £500 a year should satisfy any man. Sir Edward Clarke in one year, by means of what may perhaps not disrespectfully be called pickings, increased his statutory salary by something more than fifty per cent. As for the Attorney-General, if he does not draw £12,000 a year he begins to think there is, after all, something in the assertion about the country going to the dogs. In the year 1892–3 Sir Charles Russell received payment for services as Attorney-General amounting to £13,000. This affluence was, however, no new experience for the great advocate. A friend who, after his death, had access to his fee-book gives me some interesting particulars. Taking silk in 1872, Russell's income of £3,000 a year speedily trebled. From 1882 to 1892 it averaged £16,000 a year. In 1893, when re-appointed Attorney-General, he within the space of twelve months earned £32,826. This far exceeds the high-water mark of his successor in the Attorney-Generalship. In the financial year ending March 31st, 1904, Sir Robert Finlay, in addition to his salary as Attorney-General, received in fees £12,921 7s. 9d., making a total of £19,921 7s. 9d. His colleague, Sir Edward Carson, Solicitor-General, drew a total income of £13,068 19s. 3d. These odd shillings and pence show how, if the Law Officers of the Crown look after them, the pounds will take care of themselves.

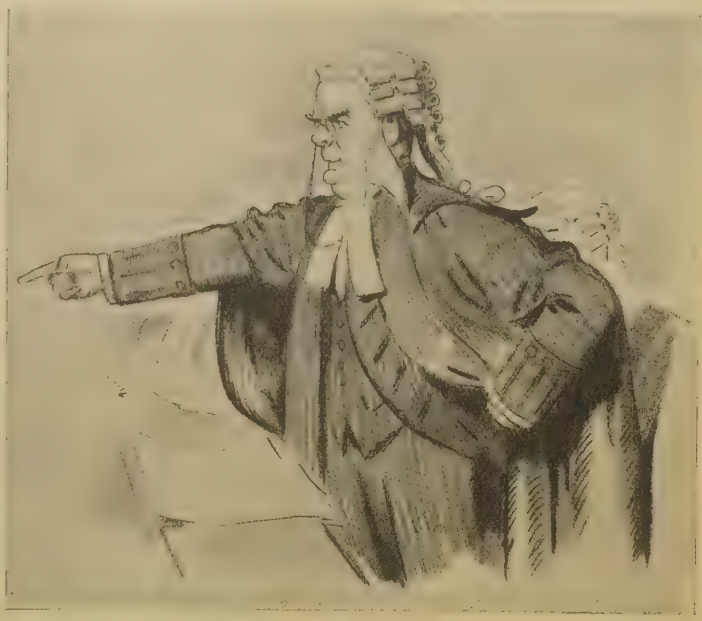
"SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT REGARDING HIMSELF AS HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN IF HE HAD NOT BEEN LURED FROM THE BAR."

To the four-hundred-a-yearer seated below the gangway on either side of the House these payments seem to soar beyond the dreams of avarice. But

in most cases the acceptance of the position of Law Officer to the Crown actually involves a loss of income.

THE WOOLSACK.

It certainly did so in the case of the present distinguished holder of the office. For this reason there was some doubt at the Bar whether there was prospect of Sir Rufus Isaacs' rich pastureland being, so to speak, parted out in small allotments among his professional brethren on his accepting office. When, disregarding the consequences as Lord Milner would, with greater emphasis, say, he took that step, it was explained that he was moved by ambition to succeed to the Woolsack. There is a common impression that in the case of a vacancy on that ancient settee the Attorney-General has by right the refusal of the appointment. There is, however, no such provision, either in custom or in statute. Sir Rufus Isaacs may in due course of affairs reach the haven of forensic desire; but it will not be by right of heritage as Attorney-General. As a matter of fact, the Attorney-General of to-day has no lien upon any judicial office. Up to recent date, on a vacancy occurring in the Chiefship of the Common Pleas he had the refusal. The office being abolished, the Attorney-General is left all forlorn, going back to his old work at the Bar, as did Sir Robert Finlay and Sir Edward Carson when their party crossed the floor of the House.



"SIR EDWARD CLARKE."

FEEDING THE HUNGRY.

The report of the Kitchen Committee of the House of Commons for the current Session is not out at the present time of writing. I hear from an authoritative source that it is not likely to lift the gloom that, from a financial point of view, lies low over the enterprise of feeding the House of Commons. Without special knowledge of the circumstances the Man in the Street, from whom few secrets are hid, would think the Committee had the softest job known in the business of catering. They trade rent free, pay no rates, have coal and gas gratuitously supplied, with generous allowance for breakages. They have a monopoly of custom, and the extent of their dealings appears from the fact that in a recent Session they served a total of 128,677 meals. These included 25,764 luncheons, 37,697 dinners, and 113 suppers (which last item indicates wholesome abstention from all-night sittings), 61,376 teas, and 3,727 peckings served at the bar. Their outlay, being net cost of provisions, cigars, wines, and other drinkables, was £13,202 4s. 10d. In the turnover they took a trifle over £16,000, including £414 table money.

This is good enough, but the scale is turned by the item of wages and salaries, which, together with miscellaneous expenses, bring the debtor side of the balance-sheet up to £17,584 whilst the earnings are £16,092. This looks like beggary, an undignified position averted by a subsidy of £2,000 a year, voted out of the pocket of the taxpayer.

Last Session the concern was run at a loss of £50 a week. It was in various ways an unfortunate season. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera, represented on the Kitchen Committee by its Chairman, Colonel Mark Lockwood. The so-called summer was more than usually atrocious, leading to the almost absolute discontinuance of Tea on the Terrace, a fruitful source of revenue. Then there was an outbreak of the Suffragettes, leading, as mentioned in another column, to the restriction of the attendance of ladies not only at tea-time but during the luncheon and dinner hours.

THE LIQUOR BILL.

An even more potent incidence in diminution of revenues of the Kitchen Committee is the modern tendency, whose growth is alternately deplored and extolled by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, towards diminution in the consumption of wine and spirits. Inheriting and maintaining the proud tradition of predecessors, the Kitchen Committee have a wine-cellar of which a host may well be proud. What they lament is the increasing lack of custom. Time was when the champagne bill of a Session was a dozen times larger than it is to-day. In other words, where a few years ago favourite brands were ordered for the dinner-table by the dozens, a single bottle now serves. Concurrently a change has taken place in the matter of the fashion of dining. Time was when the British legislator, in addition to staying himself with flagons, ordered a succession of meat courses. Members of the present House are, from the point of view of the Committee, too apt to content themselves with the shilling luncheon or dinner, the institution of which is the pride of the Chairman's declining years.

The outlook is at the moment black. It would be interesting to see what would happen supposing the business were transferred to the direction of one of our catering firms who, unsuccoured by subsidy, paying rent, taxes, and other items, satisfy their customers and pay their shareholders dividends at rates exceeding twenty per cent.

TEA ON THE TERRACE.

During the predominance of a Unionist majority under the Premiership of Mr. Arthur Balfour, Tea on the Terrace came to be one of the principal features of the London season. On a fine afternoon, with the westering sun glittering on the river and shining on the ancient fabric of Lambeth Palace, there was no livelier spectacle in London than the throng of brave men and fair women who peopled the Terrace of the House of Commons. The function was privily encouraged by the astute Ministerial Whip, who found in it a useful ally in the task of "keeping a House." With an overwhelming majority, a certainty of triumphing in the Division Lobby, there grew in Ministerial ranks a tendency to dangerous laxity of attendance. Members came down for questions and remained to hear any important speech promised. Also they might be depended upon for divisions following full-dress debate. But it is in the idle hours of a sitting that danger lurks for the master of Parliamentary legions. It is a snap division that occasionally places him in embarrassing position. Tea on the Terrace proved a bulwark against regrettable incidents of that character. Members tempted by desire for a lounge at their club or a drive through the Park, where they would find kith and kin, made discovery that for some hours of a summer afternoon their own Terrace was the hub of the social universe. They accordingly stayed to enjoy its attractions, and, incidentally, remained within sound of the division bell.

When *débâcle* followed on the General Election of 1906 there came to Westminster a large contingent unfamiliar with what the French call "a five o'clock." Oddly enough, the accomplishment of the doom of the once popular function was delayed by the action of the Labour members. They had heard and read much of Tea on the Terrace. Now, among other privileges pertaining to their new estate, they might share its joys. Or did the initiative come from their wives? However it be, during the earliest summer of the first Parliament of King Edward VII. the Labour members and their wives, the latter bringing neighbours dressed all in their best, like Sally on Sundays in our Alley, made up little parties at tables set in the best positions on the Terrace, drank tea, ate buttered buns, and, in due season, toyed with strawberries and cream.

Even this patronage did not suffice to save a fading fashion. Last Session the end was hastened by continuance of deplorable weather. The Terrace is not a desirable place when the east wind blows, and is impossible when south or west brings rain. Such were the prevalent weather regulations of last Session. Whiles there was a fog.

NO SUFFRAGETTES.

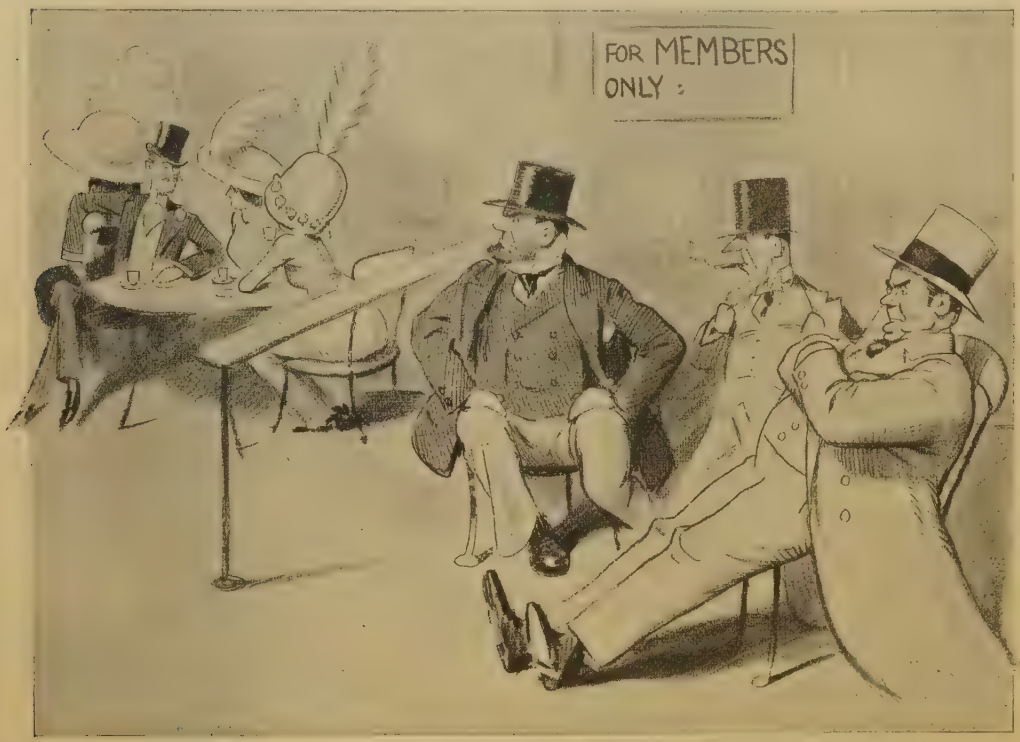
Another influence conducive to the decline and fall of Tea on the Terrace are the conditions pertaining to the admission of ladies to the precincts of Parliament. Since the Suffragettes took to denouncing mankind from the stone benches in the Central Hall, chaining themselves to the grille in the Ladies' Gallery, and making dashes on to the floor of the House past the paralyzed Serjeant-at-Arms, effectual measures have been taken to defeat their strategy. Entrance to the Lobbies from Old Palace Yard is achieved only after running the gauntlet of sentinelled police at the outer door. Save when personally conducted by

a member, progress is stopped at the farther limit of the corridor leading to the Central Lobby. The innocent suffer with the guilty. The wives and daughters of members and specially-invited guests are treated on a common footing. All may not be Suffragettes with designs on the peace of Parliament. But all are women, and as such must suffer.

LADIES IN QUARANTINE.

Inconvenience is felt even more acutely in respect of dining at the House than of taking Tea on the Terrace. Ladies bidden to the feast are kept in custody in the corridor until their host—"Sought Out" he may be named, borrowing the proud appellation bestowed upon ancient Jerusalem by the Prophet Isaiah—is hunted up. The hapless man is probably in one of the remotely-situated private dining-rooms, whither he has escorted earlier arrivals. It is necessary for him to hurry back to the corridor, rescue the new-comer, and, having escorted her to the dining-room, rush back on receipt of news that other of his guests have arrived. Before the scare the custom was for ladies invited either to tea or to dinner to assemble in the Central Hall, whence they were conducted by their host to the Inner Lobby, where they might catch glimpses of statesmen of world-wide renown. Thence they were led to the feast by private ways trodden by members, leading by a staircase to the Terrace. They, in fact, walked about as if the inevitable had arrived and they were actually members of Parliament. In these degenerate days, having escaped from quarantine in the corridor, they are ignominiously smuggled on to the level of the Terrace by a special staircase.

This was constructed a few years ago (at the expense of the nation) in order to meet the objection of crusty members who complained that their hurried passage up the old staircase on their way to save the State in the Division Lobby was obstructed by ladies passing up and down. The class of members responsible for this fresh indignity may be recognized on the Terrace by their seclusion within a space labelled "For Members Only," marked out to the left of the old doorway giving access to the Terrace. During the heyday of Tea on the Terrace there they sat —"Like tigers in a cage," as a well-known lady visitor once described them—glaring at the gay throng seated or walking, ever

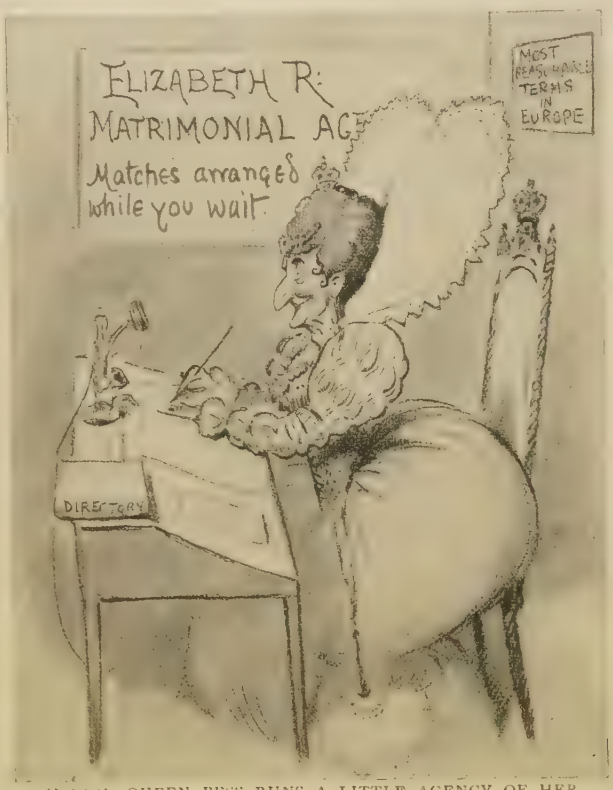


"THERE THEY SAT—'LIKE TIGERS IN A CAGE'—GLARING AT THE GAY THRONG."

chattering and laughing, adown the long length of the river-girdled promenade.

QUEEN ELIZABETH AS A MATRIMONIAL AGENT.

Among the votes which appear in the Civil Service Estimates is a modest one on account of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. This is an unpaid body of gentlemen including among their number the Master of the Rolls, the Earl of Rosebery, and Lord Morley of Blackburn. Their mission is to ascertain what unpublished manuscripts calculated to throw light upon subjects connected with the Civil, Ecclesiastical, or Scientific history of the country are to be found in the collections of private persons or in public institutions. Every Session volumes are presented to Parliament containing copies or extracts from this treasure trove. The first publication took place forty years ago. In the meantime opportunity has been provided, at a trifling cost to the purchaser, of acquiring a library of rich and rare books. The pity of it is the enterprise is so little known that the circulation of the precious volumes falls far below their value.



"GOOD QUEEN BESS RUNS A LITTLE AGENCY OF HER OWN."

Hatfield House has proved a mine of wealth to the Commissioners. No fewer than twelve portly volumes have been gleaned in its archives. In the last, just issued from the press, I find a delightful story set forth in a correspondence between Queen Elizabeth and the Emperor of Russia, not at that time known as the Czar. It appears that His Majesty, having so many children he did not know what to do, resolved to invoke the assistance of the Virgin Queen to secure a wife for one of his sons. Elizabeth accepted the commission with a zest for matrimonial matters not unfamiliar with elderly maidens.

"After overlooking the estate and qualities of all those noble families fit to be engrafted into your Majesty's stock," she writes, under date October 5th, 1602, "we have found out a young lady, being a pure maiden nobly descended by father and mother, adorned with graces and extraordinary gifts of nature, of convenient years, between eleven and twelve, of whom we are resolved to make you an offer, that if God incline the hearts of the young couple to like one another the mutual bonds of friendship may so be knot close together." She purposes to "send a special Ambassador in order to deal freely in all things necessary in an affair of this importance." As Russia is not accessible by sea before May, the Queen, fearful of the enterprise falling through, beseeches the Emperor to "be pleased to suspend from embracing any other course until you have heard what our Ambassador can say."

Unfortunately the story ends where, in this fascinating fashion, it begins. Beyond a letter addressed to the British Agent at Moscovy enclosing the letter for the Emperor, the story, like that of Cambuscan Bold, is left half told. It appears from this second communication, written by Sir Robert Cecil, that a ship being unexpectedly discovered bound for Russia, and the envoy not being ready, it was determined to present the Queen's letter through the resident English Minister.

"For the contents of the same," writes the diplomatic Sir Robert, "if you be required you may pretend to be ignorant, or otherwise use it at your best discretion."

The "S.P.B."

(Society for the Propagation of the Beard.)

By J. WILLSHER, Secretary.

Only the other day one individual, indignant that the Royal example was not more widely followed, wrote a letter to the newspapers calling upon all loyal subjects who were able to do so forthwith to grow beards. Since then a Society for the

THE DRAWINGS ON THIS PAGE REPRESENT ACTUAL BEARD-FASHIONS ONCE PREVAILING.

Society for the Propagation of the Beard.

19, TAVISTOCK ST
LONDON, W.C.

31st May, 1911

Dear Sir:

In spite of the example set by many of the most illustrious and notable men of the day, we observe with regret that you continue to have recourse to the unnatural practice of razing the hair from your face.

Do you not think from the enclosed that this practice is in your case at the expense of far greater dignity and comeliness ?

Will you not permit me to enrol you as a member of this society?

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. Willsher
Secretary.

COPY OF THE LETTER SENT OUT BY THE "S.P.B."

Propagation of the Beard has been formed, with a view to promote the practice of beard-wearing. In order to convert numerous clean-shaven members of the community, photographs have been specially prepared, showing how greatly beards would improve the personal appearance, and these photographs, which have been sent to each of their originals, we are now able to publish.

The correspondence which the accompanying letter has elicited is, of course, private, and we are not, therefore, able to gratify our readers by reproducing the comments of some of our most celebrated public personages who have been thus generously presented with beards; nor are we able to delineate the expressions of delight—nay, of rapture—on the countenances of their wives, mothers, and sisters who thus behold the objects of their reverence and devotion adorned by "face-fittings" luxuriant beyond their wildest dreams.

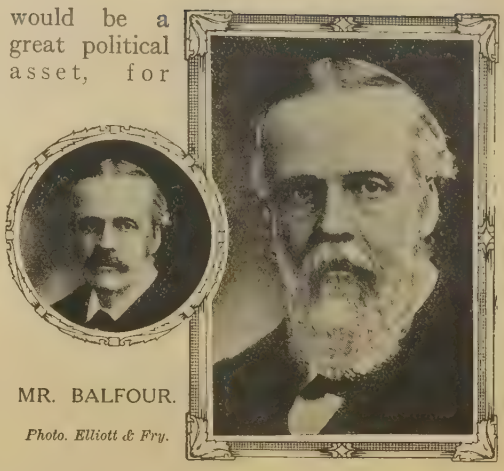
The point for the public to consider is whether their public men would not frequently cut a more imposing figure if they eschewed a razor. Opinions may vary in Mr. Asquith's case, although it is not to be denied that the slight recession of chin which marks the Prime Minister's physiognomy might be effectually diminished if not entirely concealed by a hirsute growth; but Mr. Balfour would undoubtedly gain in majesty by the addition of a beard. It is not as though criticism were being directed for the first time to the facial adornments (or the lack of them) of the Leader of the Opposition. "Mutton-chop side-whiskers of the most aggravating type,"

LORD ROSEBERY. *Photo. Heath.*

LORD HALDANE. *Photo. Vandyk.*

MR. ASQUITH.

Photo. Russell & Sons.



MR. BALFOUR.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

was Mr. T. P. O'Connor's description of Mr. Balfour's growth twenty years ago. He has shaved them since then, but there is nothing to take their place. In succeeding some years ago to his noble uncle's place as Prime Minister, should he not also have had Lord Salisbury's noble beard in reversion?

The case of Lord Rosebery is more difficult. Perhaps he is one of those few men who appear to better advantage clean-shaven, although the patriarchal note which has lately appeared in his lordship's writings and speeches is hardly in keeping with a visage still juvenile in spite of its crown of white hair.

But with a bearded Viscount Haldane, who shall say that the caricaturist has not been robbed of some of his more salient advantages? Take Mr. F. E. Smith; is not his extremely juvenile appearance a drawback? Would not Mr. Winston Churchill, in a flowing beard, command greater reverence on both sides of the House?

Beards are not popular in Wales, otherwise it is difficult to account for the absence of one on the chin of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It would be a great political asset, for beards are no longer associated with revolution, as they were in the middle of the last century, but with virtue and benignity. Mr. Birrell bears some likeness to the late Anthony Trollope in his beard. The fact that we already have one bearded Conservative statesman of fashion in the person of Sir Gilbert Parker might tend to dissuade Mr. Austen Chamberlain from growing one. Could not Sir Arthur Conan Doyle be induced to grow a beard, and so complete his physical unlikeness to his immortal Sherlock? Again, would Mr. Anthony Hope's admirers be fewer if he ceased to shave?

The same query might be asked of two such divines as the Bishop of London and the Rev. R. J. Campbell. Would Sir Arthur Pinero's plays be more closely linked with those of Mr. Bernard Shaw if he should grow a beard? The present Admiral of the Fleet is a bearded man, and a beard becomes most sailors. Why, then, should Lord Charles Beresford hesitate even at so late an hour? A beard would signalize the beginning of a Parliamentary career as

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

Photo. Russell & Sons.

MR. F. E. SMITH, K.C.

Photo. R. Haines.

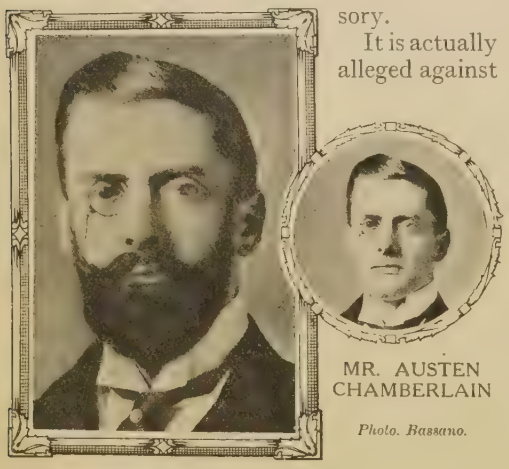
MR. LLOYD GEORGE.

Photo. E. H. Mills.

MR. BIRRELL.

Photo. Haines.

distinguished as that he has achieved in the Navy. And Mr. Seymour Lucas would be no less successful an artist if he cultivated a barbal accessory.



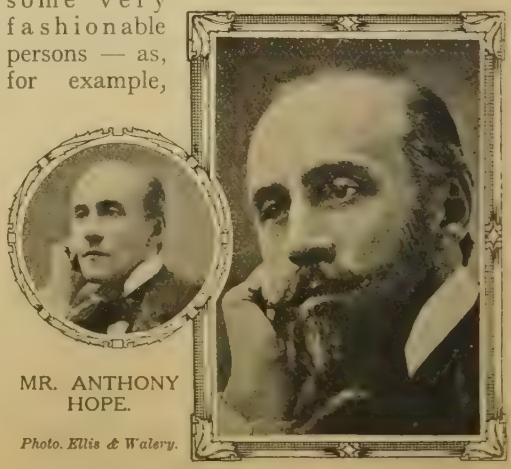
MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN

Photo. Bassano.

It is actually alleged against beards that they are unhygienic. "Beards collect germs, which are thus readily conveyed to the thoracic mucous membrane, to become the propagators of disease." This statement, penned by a person who perhaps has tried to grow a beard and failed, is often quoted as an argument for shaving.

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.



MR. ANTHONY HOPE.

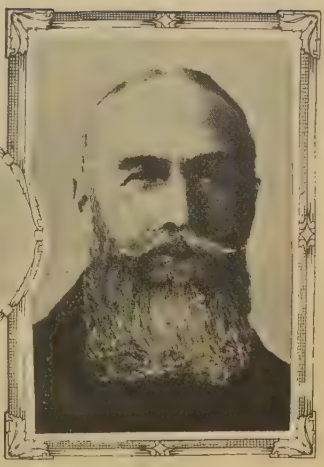
Photo. Ellis & Walery.

Is there any truth in all this? "If I thought," writes Mr. Lowther, the Speaker of the House of Commons, to the secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Beard, "it was uncomfortable or unhealthy to wear a beard I should have shaved mine off twenty-six years ago." As a matter of fact, there is no truth in the sanitary argument — it is just the other way. Beards serve as both internal and external protectors of the throat, as Nature intended they should. Physicians often recommend that the beard should be allowed to grow on the chin and throat in cases of liability to inflammation of the larynx or of the bronchia; and moustaches and whiskers are reckoned useful for prevention of toothache and nervous diseases of the face.

The real enemy to beards is fashion. And yet this requires some explanation, because some very fashionable persons — as, for example,

REV. R. J. CAMPBELL.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.



THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

Photo. Vandyk.

wear beards. Of course, the explanation is that it is the fashion to look young, and beards are supposed to tend to make one look old. Beards confer dignity, and this is not a dignified age. Beards are formal, and this is not an age of formality.

But another attack on beards by the redoubtable Mr. Frank Richardson is more serious. He calls them "face-fittings." In one respect General Ulysses Grant and Mr. Arthur Bourchier join hands and hearts, for while the former averred, "I shaved off my beard to please my family, and never was so uncomfortable in my life," the latter states: "I grew a beard to please the public, and for six months I was never so happy."

Let but His Royal Highness Prince Arthur of Connaught, Lord Spencer, Lord Howard de Walden, Mr. Cyril Maude, and Mr. Seymour Hicks grow beards, and to-morrow (or say in six months' time) a revolution will have happened and the whole face (or at least half the face) of England will be altered.

SIR A. W. PINERO.

Photo. Ellis & Walery.

LORD CHAS. BERESFORD.

Photo. Dinham.

MR. SEYMOUR LUCAS, R.A.

Photo. E. H. Mills.

Boaz Tucker's Miracle.

A TRUE EPISODE OF EARLY MORMON DAYS.

By WINIFRED GRAHAM,

Author of "Ezra the Mormon."

Illustrated by Sydney Seymour Lucas.

[The attention of the reader is invited to the fact that the writer of this story, who is a well-known authority on Mormon history and customs, vouches for its accuracy. The events described, which actually took place, throw a strange light on a question which has recently been brought so prominently before the public eye.]

I.

"THE Mormons told me this was heaven," said the Gentile boy, pushing his hat to the back of his head and ruffling the curly hair over his perplexed forehead. "It strikes me, Awilda, Mormonism can make Utah somewhat like the other place at times."

The girl looked at her young admirer with eyes of reproof.

"Perhaps you are unhappy," she whispered softly, "because you have not joined our community. What could be more like Paradise than this lovely scene?"

She stretched her arms as if to embrace the country landscape. They were seated on a bank thick with the stems of ballooning dandelions. Above their heads hummingbirds whirled among the white tops of blossoming locust trees. In the distance the blue Salt Lake gleamed like an azure mirror.

"Your community!" cried the hot-blooded youth, with indignation. "Do you know that the servant in my little house is one of your Bishop's sixty-three children, and his mother one of seven wives? Under the sway of Brigham Young you and your people are only slaves. It maddens me to think your parents are scheming to marry you to that polygamous old 'saint,' Boaz Tucker. His father was convicted as a ringleader in the Mountain Meadow Massacre, and a bounty was offered for his head; so the son comes of a cruel and scheming family. Perhaps you don't know his mother was seared with a hot iron cattle-brand by her better-half, for the terrible crime of declining to keep his saddle in her parlour."

Walter Harrison's voice shook with scorn, for he loved Awilda madly. Already he had breathed many heresies into the ears of the Mormon maiden, whispering that if she would fly with him to Gentile lands he could save her from the shame and degradation of her faith. She lived in a rambling old farm-house, which looked so peaceful it was hard to believe it had reared a horde of polygamous families.

Awilda's eyes were full of mystery as she spoke to him in the low, musical voice which set his pulses beating.

"If Boaz Tucker were not a great saint, I should dread the thought of marriage with him. I can't help loving you, Walter, but Boaz is chosen of the Lord. He is a Seer and Revelator; all his wives will receive exaltation in the future life. I know you don't believe in his miracles. Is it because you are a little jealous? To-morrow a great proof will be given to show he is superhuman. He proposes to walk on the face of the waters, as our Lord did on the Sea of Galilee, before hundreds of spectators."

An expression of celestial rapture added a fresh beauty to Awilda's face. She was so young and trustful that Walter sickened as he listened to her praise of the arch-hypocrite and trickster, who was scheming to ruin her life. The Gentile knew well enough that Elder Tucker would treat his fresh plural bride no better than the cows lying in the shade near a flowering stretch of marsh at the head of the broad, sunny meadow. There the redwings fed their young, while the bobolinks sang merrily. Walter had heard with disgust Elder Tucker essaying to speak in unknown tongues, describing the vehement nonsense which issued from his lips as "the

language of the ancient people of Zarahemlah." Boaz was the equal of Joseph Smith in his willingness to descend to jugglery, exciting large congregations by boastful pretence of false revelations.

"If I could prove to you, Awilda, that Elder Tucker is not what he represents himself to be, but a man capable of infamous deception, would you throw off the shackles of this creed and come with me to the old country, where one wife is the queen of one man's home? I have made all necessary preparations for our escape, and I have a strong body of friends ready to help me. Let the walking on the water be the test. If Tucker succeeds, I will go away and never see you again. Should he fail, will that decide you to break away from Mormon impostures and put your trust in me?"

Awilda's secret lover had done much to break down the priestly control and Church superstitions which surrounded her young life. Deep down in her heart a doubt had sprung into life, though outwardly she still protested that the Elders were saints of God. Half in terror at her daring, she bowed her head in assent.

"You Englishmen," she whispered, "marry for love; we Mormons marry for religion, and bear much for the sake of our creed. Though all deny that polygamy causes suffering, they know it well enough. My uncle's two wives, who dress alike and profess to be as sisters, are really broken-hearted creatures. One has spells of being possessed by the Evil Spirit. Between ourselves, it is really jealousy. She suffers the agony of martyrdom when Uncle Sidney showers presents on his younger wife."

A desperate longing to escape the awful fate in store for herself made Awilda powerless to resist the sudden fond embrace of her unaccepted Gentile lover.

"Show me exactly where the miracle is to take place," whispered Walter, as he released her rosy lips. "I shall be there with your concourse of godly people; only my fate, as well as Tucker's, will hang in the balance."

Awilda rose stealthily, glancing round to make sure they were unobserved. Then she led him to the selected spot for the Prophet's manifestation of power. A stretch of still water just below the breast of a dam was chosen as the holy site, where Mormon eyes must behold the Divine completeness of Elder Boaz.

"'MANY OF OUR WOMEN ENVY ME THE CHANCE OF MARRYING SUCH AN EXALTED MAN,' AWILDA TOLD WALTER."

"Many of our women envy me the chance of marrying such an exalted man," Awilda told Walter, her fingers still pressed in his

burning palm. "Fancy the honour of being chosen by one who tells us on oath he was caught up like Moses into an exceeding high mountain, and saw God face to face! Oh, you smile; you are destroying my faith with your smile."

"Thank Heaven for that!" exclaimed the young man, warmly. They were standing among the fragrant sage-bushes, and the magpies screamed as if in derision, while a rock-squirrel peeped at them furtively, the only witness to Walter's heresy.

"Boaz will walk on the water," added the girl, "at nine o'clock to-morrow morning. People are coming from great distances, and will start at daybreak. They will have to be up with the meadow-lark."

Her listener appeared suddenly absent-minded; his brain was working quickly. The time was short in which to circumvent this blasphemous display. The moments snatched with Awilda were always fraught with danger. That morning her parents were absent, but even now some hidden spy might be watching the Gentile in the Mormon camp. Awilda read in his eyes the unspoken apprehension.

"I must be getting back to the farm," she said. "It is terribly rash of us to meet by broad daylight."

"The opportunity was too good to miss, sweetheart," he answered, the spice of danger adding colour to a romance so real and earnest that he would have given his life for the loved one.

A last word of good-bye, and Awilda crept back to the home of rigid discipline. Her thoughts strayed far from the menial tasks which lay to hand. Mechanically she dusted the big rocking-chairs, the Book of Mormon which lay on the central table, and Brigham Young's bust above the mantelpiece. When her mother returned, she kissed the bright face as she imparted a piece of news.

"You are to be sealed to Boaz Tucker early this fall, my child. He tells me that in return you will be permitted hereafter to pass by the gods and angels who guard the gates of eternity. You will not only be a glory to your husband and offspring, but a priestess-queen unto your Heavenly Father."

Awilda was silent, and her mother thought she was struck dumb with awe.

"I wish," said the girl at last, "that he looked more like my idea of a saint. I should like to see some spiritual light in his eyes. It is unfortunate they are so small and foxy. He is old, too. I can't help disliking his shiny, bald head, pimply face, and fat, well-fed figure. He talks so much of himself in his addresses. Somehow his wives never look happy, and his children are puny little rats."

Mrs. Vance flung up her hands in horror at her daughter's rebellious tone.

"I am grieved you should speak such foolish infidel words," she exclaimed, shaking Awilda by the shoulder. "You must be in an awful state of blindness. It is terrible to think your mind is so honeycombed with error. If you give way to such ideas, Satan will get great power over you. Outward appearance matters little, and to-morrow you will see his face shine with exceeding lustre like Abinadi's. The faith of Boaz is as a live coal from off the altar. Your father's wives are happy enough, but we none of us walk about grinning from ear to ear. We are conscious of our hidden crown of glory; that is all-sufficient."

Refusing to discuss the matter further, Mrs. Vance set Awilda a heavy task of ironing, by the kitchen window bright with house-plants. As the slender young figure swayed backwards and forwards over the board, the girl looked as fresh as the clean white linen under her hand.

All that day the love scene of the morning dwelt uppermost in her mind. It was of Walter she thought when the rich glow of sunset cast its crimson reflection over the distant lake into which the golden orb sank, leaving the sky a sea of rainbow hues. Awilda breathed the Gentile's name as her eyes rested on the great evening star, which dimmed the lesser lights above the strong outline of mountain slope.

Her father, smoking his pipe after the evening meal in the bosom of his plural family, bade all rise early to attend the great ceremonial of the water-walking miracle.

"Boaz Tucker will spend the whole night in prayer, and anoint himself with sacred oil before treading in the blessed steps of the Most High," said Joseph Vance. "He deserves a generous outfit of wives, enough to ensure him the very highest rank among the gods."

Joseph looked as he spoke at the wondrously-fair, flower-like face which had excited the much-married Elder's admiration.

That night there was little sleep for Awilda. Her mind was confused as to the truth or falsity of her parents' religion. Walter's words appeared so sane compared with the fulsome rhetoric of Mormon teachers. She had been told to don her smartest attire, but

it was for Walter's eyes that she made herself especially beautiful.

"It may be the last time the poor boy will ever see me," she thought, sorrowfully. "Elder Tucker would never bring all these people to witness a miracle he could not perform. Walter will be convinced, and he will leave me to my fate."

From her bedroom window she could see lines of people streaming to the spot on the outskirts of the meadows. Even the old hens and their young ones were making their way to the stretch of water, as if in curiosity.

Vance, with his large following of women and children, started in procession from the farmhouse through rosy hedges of pink weeds, scaring noisy flocks of blackbirds from the cat-tails.

Boaz Tucker had certainly selected a picturesque spot. The exquisitely-tinted grasses waved like spirit-forms around his massive figure as he approached the scene of his coming exploit. The chewink's cheerful voice greeted him without a note of doubt, while no cynicism reigned in the hearts of his earnest spectators. Two pairs of eyes alone regarded him with unfriendly gaze. The girl he had marked down for his property thought she had never seen him look so gross and malignant, while Walter, whose love for her was pure and strong, glared at the portly form from a respectful distance.

"Come to be converted, Gentile boy?" queried a satirical Elder, noting the young man's pale face.

Walter looked as if he had passed the night out of doors. His clothes were dishevelled, his eyes weary. He was too engrossed in watching the water to heed the passing jeer.

Before addressing this open-air congregation, Boaz moved towards the Vance family. In one large, soft hand he crushed Awilda's little fingers; the other he lay heavily on her shoulder, while he gazed hungrily at the fairness of her skin.

"You know," he whispered, "what I have planned for your salvation, my little one. I have become a god, and have a world of my own, peopled with my offspring. I shall rule over my wives and children during the eternal

"SHE COULD SEE LINES OF PEOPLE STREAMING TO THE SPOT ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE MEADOWS."

"BOAZ TUCKER WALKED FORTH UPON THE WATER."

ages, possessed of everlasting prerogatives and power."

Awilda caught her breath. She was confused and torn. Possibly her parents were right, this was a man of mysterious holiness.

She felt in a dream as she listened to the singing, while Boaz stood at the water's edge with hands outstretched in blessing. He beckoned the great multitude to gather round, that none might lose sight of this marvellous manifestation. Raising his voice, which was lusty as the bellowing of an ox, he spoke to the multitude:—

"Once again, my beloved brothers and

sisters, the heavens have been opened, and angels have come down to bring a dispensation to man. Demons are cast out, for the Latter Day Glory has dawned upon the earth. This morning we have not come to this calm pool for baptismal purposes, though we are under the influence of the Spirit. I have reaped a great harvest. To-day I will prove that I am a chosen vessel. The corrupting theories of the Gentiles" (here he shot a look of disdain in Walter's direction) "will be for ever silenced. They cannot reach the celestial rapture of Mormon miracle-workers. Recently I had a revelation. A voice from heaven bade me walk upon the breast of the waters. When none have been near to see, I have traversed lakes and rivers in this miraculous manner. Now I have come to prove, in the open, the truth of my words. These waters are deep and I cannot swim, therefore I entrust myself wholly to the hosts above. I pray that absolute silence may reign as I pass from shore to shore."

A terrible hush of breathless expectation fell upon the crowd. Then, with the greatest assurance, Boaz Tucker walked forth upon the water, reaching in safety the centre of the pool. Suddenly, to the confusion and amazement of his disciples, he disappeared with a loud splash, as if some gigantic crustacean had pulled him under. In the general agitation which followed it was believed he would have a narrow escape from drowning, but the Prophet, who had protested he could not swim, now struck out boldly for land. Everyone was talking at once and running about, which enabled Walter to edge up and whisper in Awilda's ear.

"My work," he gasped. "Remember your promise, Awilda—your promise of yesterday."

II.

Boaz had many excuses to make for his lamentable failure, but did not offer to repeat the experiment. He protested that some unbeliever in the ranks of spectators had ill-wished him, but the power to swim had been miraculously granted, thereby saving a consecrated life.

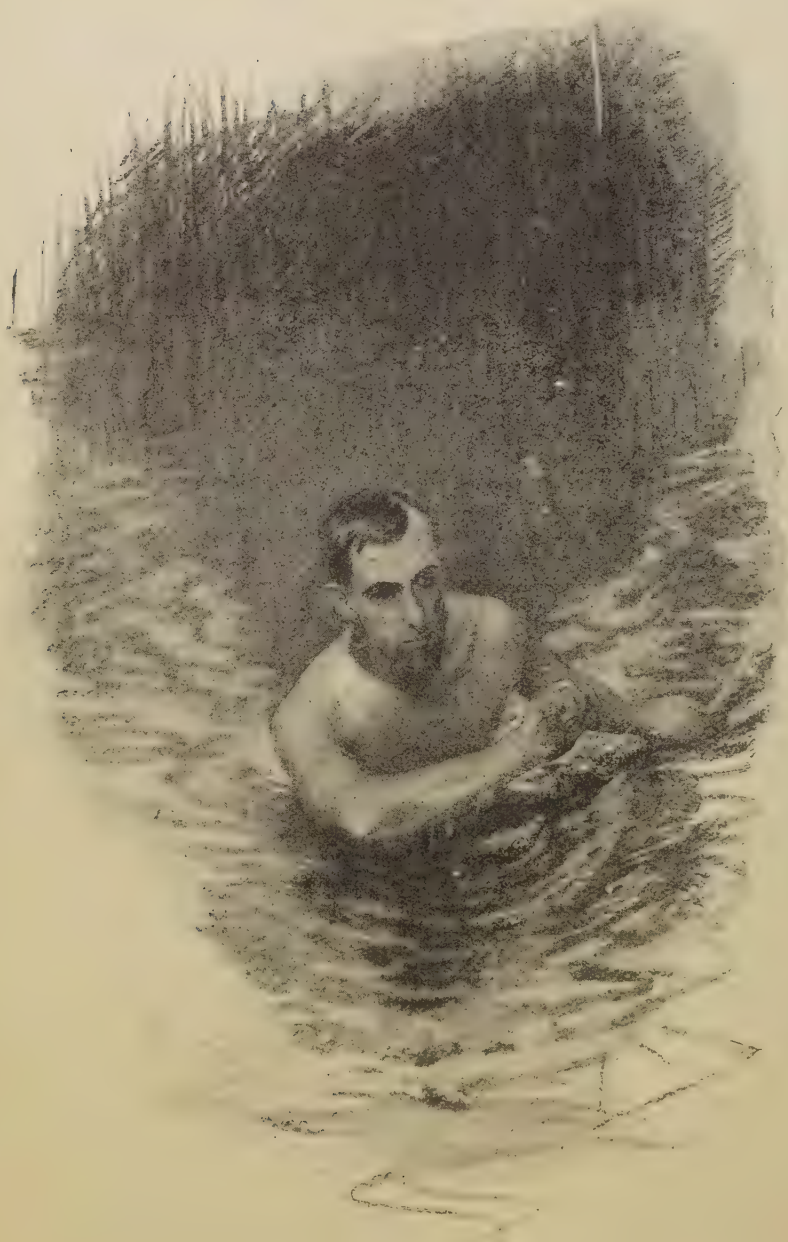
On returning to the farmhouse, Mr. Vance forbade his family to mention the distressing circumstances of the morning. Elder Tucker had promised a large consignment of cattle to Awilda's father on the day of the sealing.

When twilight fell, the girl crept to a secret receptacle hidden in the bank where the dandelions grew, under an old wagon-wheel, rusted with age. There she found an expected letter from Walter Harrison.

"My Own Little Saint" (ran the words), —"I knew well enough that sly dodger had something up his sleeve, so, when darkness fell last night, I stripped and swam every inch of the pool. I soon discovered some invisible means of support just beneath the muddy surface of the stagnant pool. At intervals of a little less than a yard tripods of wood were firmly fixed in the bottom, the tops of which formed a safe foothold within two inches of the surface. These tops were skilfully coloured to match the turbid water, further ensuring their invisibility. I surreptitiously removed one of the tripods from the centre, where the pool was deepest. I did not mean Tucker to drown, and had a rope, hidden by the shore, in case of emergency. I have since discovered that he was known in his youth as a most expert swimmer, before he settled in these parts.

"Meet me to-night, if you can escape, at the gate beyond the orchard. I shall be waiting under the apple trees with a couple of swift horses. We will gallop away like the fastest ranchmen to the outside life of the world. So far, you have only known it by the distant whistle of an express train on its way from New York to San Francisco. Love and marriage, as we English know them, await you far from the harems of Mormon Elders. I shall watch all night on the chance of your coming.—Yours for all time, Walter."

The family at the farm were wonderfully silent that night, and retired early. No bolts and bars modernized this rural homestead. It would be the easiest possible matter to steal out to the green orchard, and pass under the fruit trees to the quiet lane where Walter had proposed to wait. Awilda gave no second thought to Elder Tucker; her mind was made up—she would shake the dust of Utah from her feet. She felt little regret at leaving the parents who had brought her up in so hard a faith. Her secret farewells to the chickens and cows were the only tender episodes of this home-leaving. To the hen-roost and barn-yard she blew a kiss as she crept out at midnight. It was strange to feel this was good-bye for ever to the tame old rooster who fed from her hand and the downy balls of fluff constituting his family. Like a shadow she passed to the trysting-place, where Walter caught her in his arms and, kissing her passionately, lifted her to the saddle. A whiff of strong salt air came from the distant lake; the warm, dreamy night was full of magic, and the lovers' spirits were buoyant as the smooth surface of the waters they would never view again.



"I STRIPPED AND SWAM EVERY INCH OF THE POOL."

Beyond, a world of enchantment awaited the coming of this youthful pair. Hazy mountains rose ghost-like over the visionary scene, their secret fastnesses mysterious as the doors of love. Awilda whispered that she felt as one of the white gulls spreading their wings and flying away, only she was leaving behind the dark shadows of polygamy. With rapture in their hearts as the shy light of dawn silted through the silent trees, they passed to their "Holy of holies," far from the border-line of danger.

A PACK OF CARDS.

Its Stories, Legends, and Romances.

Wherever possible, the cards reproduced belong to the period of the story attached.

II.

THE ACE OF SPADES.

TO many the ace of spades and not another is head of the pack, and in proof of this they point out that it is upon the ace of spades, as representing the whole pack, that His Majesty's playing-card tax is levied. The maker used to engrave a plate for twenty aces of spades; the printing was done by the Government at Somerset House, and one pound was paid by the maker for every sheet of aces so printed. The tax has now been reduced to threepence. Spadille, as this card is called at ombre and quadrille, still bears the maker's name. In the wonderful card-game described in Pope's "Rape of the Lock," when the antagonists sit down

At ombre singly to decide their doom!

. . . . . .

"Let spades be trumps," she said, and trumps they were

. . . . . .

Spadillio first, unconquerable lord!
Led off two captive trumps and swept the board.

But spadille, for all his conquests and all his pride, will probably best be known as the card of the Corsican Witch's cauldron, the ace of spades being one of the ingredients, together with two adders, twenty-four spiders, seven toads, and a ewe lamb's heart, of the appetizing stew which Alexandre Dumas imagined as assisting to foretell the wondrous career of the infant Napoleon. By what is probably a coincidence, the ace of spades also figures as a chief card in the so-called Napoleon's Book of Fate.

THE KING OF SPADES.

With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary majesty of spades appears;
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight revealed,
The rest his many-coloured robe concealed.
The rebel knave who dares his prince engage
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.

But in France at one time the "hoary majesty of spades" was represented by the "fretful irritability" of Jean Jacques Rousseau, while in America the same card threatened to be "Lafayette" for all time to come. Indeed, the four kings, like their flesh-and-blood originals, seemed likely to lose all prestige in the New World, and in 1848 Republican packs began to be manufactured in New York, having neither kings nor queens. The president of hearts was George Washington; of diamonds, John Adams; of clubs, Franklin; and of spades, Lafayette. In this pack one of the queens is Venus, modestly concealing her charms; and the others are respectively Fortune, Ceres, and Minerva. This was only following the principle of the French, who, at the time of the Revolution, filled the places of the card-kings by four philosophers—Molière, La Fontaine, Voltaire, and Rousseau; and those of the four queens by four virtues—Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude. Thus in France the player would cry: "Je joue le grand philosophe de pique!" while in America the lucky player would win a rubber by his possession of the patriot of spades. Occasionally, however, it may not be doubted, habit got the better of him, and the king would creep into his conversation almost as often as the martyred king's head crept into the Memorial of Mr. Dick.

THE QUEEN OF SPADES.

As for "the Imperial consort of the Crown of Spades," the "Minerva" of the Republican pack, she is famous as having led to the conviction of the murderer of Captain Roger South in 1823. A pack of cards with which he had been playing with his victim, and known to have been purchased by him, was found in the pocket of South's shooting-coat. They were exhibited in evidence with the bloody print of the murderer's thumb across the face of the queen of spades. It com-

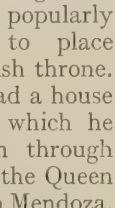
pletely destroyed the prisoner's *alibi*, and, although the Bertillon system was then unborn, the bloody thumb-mark was accepted as damning testimony, and the man was hanged.

THE KNAVE OF SPADES.

The "rebel knave"—he of spades—will be eternally associated with one of the most dramatic incidents of the reign of Elizabeth—the discovery of the Throgmorton plot and the expulsion of the Spanish Ambassador. For a long time the jack of spades was always popularly associated with the conspiracy to place Mary Queen of Scots on the English throne. "Throgmorton," says Froude, "had a house in London at Paul's Wharf, to which he returned and became the medium through which Morgan communicated with the Queen of Scots, and the Queen of Scots with Mendoza. The secret police observed him frequently leaving the Spanish Ambassador's house. He was watched. Other suspicious circumstances were noted, and an order was issued to seize his person and search his rooms. When the constables entered he was in the act of ciphering a letter to Mary Stuart. He darted up a staircase, destroying the paper on his way. He had time to entrust a casket of compromising letters to a maid-servant, who carried them to Mendoza, and also to cipher a few hasty words on the back of the knave of spades and to fling it into the casket by way of explanation." Froude summarizes the message, which ran: "I have sworn I know naught of anything found here, that they must have been left by someone who seeks my deadly hurt. Be not afraid of my constancy. They shall kill me a thousand times ere I betray. . . ." But for this fateful message, Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, would not have been apprised of the arrest and would not have been on his guard. He was able to warn the other conspirators, and, as a consequence, "there was a flight of Catholics over the Channel thick as autumn swallows." Throgmorton succumbed to the rack, confessed all, and was executed. Mendoza was banished from the kingdom.

THE TEN OF SPADES.

The ten of spades is "Buffalo Bill's card." On one occasion the celebrated Colonel Cody ("Buffalo Bill") laid a wager of a thousand dollars that he would pierce every pip on the ten of spades with a revolver-bullet at twelve yards. This feat he is actually said to have accomplished; the card so pierced was put up for auction, and sold to one of Buffalo Bill's admirers for a hundred and fifty dollars. It eventually found its way into a "dime museum" of curiosities in Chicago.

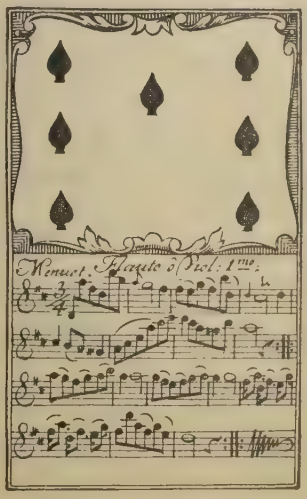


THE NINE OF SPADES.

It was on the nine of spades that the great Italian statesman, Cavour, wrote, "Ayez de respect pour les petites cartes," and gave it back as a souvenir and a motto to an Englishman from whom he won ten thousand francs in an evening, at a time when this card was his highest trump. Cavour always spoke of the nine of spades as his "lucky card." We are told that he was consumed by a passion for whist. "It dominated his whole being, and he could not live unless it formed a part of his daily food. His skill in the game was undoubted; if he had a fault, he was too venturous, perhaps—too dashing." During the sittings of the Paris Congress he never missed a night's attendance at the Jockey Club. His gains were enormous; they were computed at more than twenty thousand pounds. How much of his good luck was due to the nine of spades is not recorded.

THE EIGHT OF SPADES.

In July, 1866, Lord Lansdowne, father of the present peer, was enjoying a game of whist in the drawing-room of White's Club, his partner being Colonel Taylour, Conservative Party Whip. Spades were trumps, and one was called for. Lord Lansdowne began fumbling with his cards, and at length, as if unable to follow suit, played a heart. His partner suspected a revoke, but at that instant the cards fell from his lordship's hand to the floor, luckily face downwards. Colonel Taylour picked them up. Lord Lansdowne thanked him, nervously rearranged them, and resumed play. Again the cards fell from his hand. "I feel very ill," he murmured; "have the goodness to summon me a cab." With difficulty he was carried into the vehicle. On alighting, a card slipped out from his clothing on to the pavement, and was picked up by a friend. "Ah," faintly whispered the peer, "there is that card that distracted me so." It was the eight of spades. Lord Lansdowne was borne upstairs to his bed to die, and the friend returned with the fatal souvenir to the club.

THE SEVEN OF SPADES.

The seven of spades enjoys a melancholy celebrity as being the only known survivor of the pack of cards used by the ill-fated Marie Antoinette, and given by her to her little son the Dauphin. They were for a long time his only playthings, but they were taken away by his jailer, the brutal Simon, and sold to a deputy who, for this very purchase, is said to have incurred the suspicions of the authorities as a Jacobin. The cards were seized and destroyed, all but two — one of which afterwards came into the possession of the Comte d'Artois (Charles X.), and the other, the seven of spades, was given to an Englishman of rank, who in turn presented it to Lady Schreiber.

THE SIX OF SPADES.

Why is this card called "Poor Dick"? Here is the story:—

There was once a club in St. James's Square called the Roxburgh, where high stakes were the order of the day and night. On one celebrated occasion, we are told, a quartette of players, Harvey Combe, "Tippoo" Smith, Ward (the member for London), and Sir John Malcolm, sat down to play on Monday evening, and continued with scarce a break through two nights and a day, separating at last at eleven o'clock on Wednesday morning. They had only been playing two hours when word was brought to Combe that his partner in business had just died, tidings which caused him so much emotion that he trumped his partner's trick with the six of spades. "Poor Dick," he said, as he drew the trick, and gazed at the card absently. His luck now suddenly turned, and he began winning, until ultimately he had won from Sir John Malcolm the almost incredible sum of thirty thousand pounds. The protracted play probably induced hallucinations, and at last Combe arose and cried out: "This is the fourth time running I have been dealt the six of spades, and I feel nervous. Why should it suggest Dick Reade?" "Because you heard of his death when you were playing it, perhaps," suggested his partner. "Zounds!" cried Combe. "When is Dick to be buried?" "At noon to-day," said someone. He had just time to dart out to a barber's and a haberdasher's, and drive off in a hackney coach to his partner's funeral. Combe afterwards declared that he saw the dead man's face distinctly in the card. It is related of him that as he rose he declared to Sir John Malcolm, "I must go now, but you shall have your revenge to-morrow." "Thank you," was the reply; "another sitting of this sort and I shall be forced to return to India."

THE FIVE OF SPADES.

More than one whist enthusiast has literally died in harness with the cards in his hands. Such was the "glorious fate" of the great Bath player, Lookup, who expired at "double dummy" ere he could play his last card, which happened to be the five of spades. In this case, as in another already related, the card was "reverently" (or otherwise) buried with him.

THE FOUR OF SPADES.

"Crockford's Last Card." That was the inscription on a four of spades that once reposed behind a small glass case in what is now the Devonshire Club. Yet Crockford was not a card-player, although his patrons reported that he occasionally played halfpenny nap with the chef and head-waiter; but on the day that he retired a pack of cards was found in his pocket. He drew them out solemnly, saying, "After to-day I have done with these for ever. Would you oblige me, gentlemen, by sitting down with me at a rubber?" The persons addressed complied, and in some fifty minutes Crockford and his partner had won fourteen pounds at a modest shilling a point. Crockford threw the last card on the table. It was a four of spades. As proprietor of the chief gaming-club in the world, he had amassed a million of money.

THE THREE OF SPADES.

"There's no luck in the tray" is an old gambler's motto, mentioned by most of the standard writers on card-games, but there is at least one instance on record where the tray or three of clubs brought a bride to a

Fitzgerald, one of the ancestors of the present Duke of Leinster. He was in love with a certain heiress and beauty of the house of Ormonde, who, however, the story goes, was by no means in love with him, at least not in the beginning. The young lady, who was being wooed by another suitor, professed to be very superstitious, and resolved to leave her matrimonial choice to the cards, premising that her decision would be final. A certain gipsy of renown, Blind Kate as she was called, who was, notwithstanding, no blinder than many other folks, was summoned, and the young lady's fortune publicly told. After being shuffled and sorted in the usual manner, the cards were then laid face downwards on the table, and the two rivals were asked by the enchantress to draw their emblems, show them to each other and to none beside, and to return them to the table. Fitzgerald drew the three of spades and uttered an audible groan. His rival drew a lucky card, the seven of hearts. They then retired and the gipsy shuffled the cards and separated them into seven heaps, three in a row and one in the middle. In the midst of profound silence the lady was asked to draw the distant shadow of her husband from the centre pack. She promptly drew, and the card was the three of spades. She turned pale and the hag asked, "Will you now draw his shadow grown nearer?" Again the cards were shuffled and again she drew a three of spades. "There is still a chance that it is another," croaked the old woman. And once more the cards were arranged, and yet again she drew the three of spades. They carried the young lady out in a fainting condition, and all agreed it was a most extraordinary and mysterious affair, until it occurred to the father of the damsel to follow Blind Kate and extort from her a confession. Her story was that the unsuccessful lover had attempted to bribe her into using a pack containing all sevens of hearts, which she, disliking his character, had effectually frustrated by employing one containing nothing but threes of spades. It only remains to be said that the lady held to her promise and that her married life proved, despite her first predilections, to be of unbounded felicity.

THE TWO OF SPADES.

All card-players know that when turned up as the trump-card the deuce of spades is to be tapped for luck. "There's luck," saith the proverb, "under a black deuce." One possible exception there is to this proverb: the player must in no circumstances touch the card with his elbow. Whence was this superstition derived?

THE ACE OF CLUBS.

If the Duke of Cumberland had only had the ace of clubs on a memorable occasion at the public rooms at Bath, he was wont to say that he would have been twenty thousand pounds richer. "That card cost me a fortune." He was playing whist with three of the wealthiest men of the day, and was dealt such a splendid hand that he unhesitatingly made a bet of twenty thousand pounds on the game. The cards he held were king, knave, nine, and seven of trumps (clubs); ace and king of diamonds; ace, king, queen, and knave of hearts; ace, king, and queen of spades. His partner did not hold a single card of any value. Yet the Duke was easily beaten; he did not win one trick. The Duke's right-hand adversary held five small trumps, and the other eight cards in his hand consisted entirely of hearts and spades. To his left-hand opponent there was dealt ace, queen, ten, and eight of trumps, and queen, knave, ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four in diamonds. The Duke led a small trump, which his left-hand antagonist won and returned by a lead in diamonds.

"What a 'Jeroboam' hand the Duke of Cumberland must have held at Bath!" exclaims the author of "English Whist." He explains that in the early part of the last century, when fortune blessed any player with cards of overwhelming strength, he was said to be possessed of a "Jeroboam" hand. The phrase is derived through the "Jeroboam" of claret at Oxford, a measure of magnitude, from the division of the tribes when Jeroboam obtained "ten of the tribes of Israel and his rival was left with only two."

It was on an ace of clubs that Oliver Goldsmith inscribed an I O U to Sir Joshua Reynolds, the intimation being additionally expressed by the three balls of Lombardy in silhouette, which has already been made familiar as a squiggle from another quarter in the pages of this magazine.

THE KING OF CLUBS.

"The King of Clubs" is familiar as the title bestowed by Johnson on the Club or the Literary Club, but the card itself is not without its special fame in literature, for has it not been sung by Pope in deathless verse?

The club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien and barbarous pride;
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?

Which reminds us that these last two lines were amusingly but somewhat invidiously quoted by an American caricaturist who was portraying for the benefit of his countrymen the Coronation of King Edward VII.

THE QUEEN OF CLUBS.

"Black Bess" is the common nickname of the queen of clubs, although in Lincolnshire, we are told, the card is known as "Queen Bess." One reason given strikes us as extremely unsound—"because the Virgin Queen was of a swarthy complexion." Now, if we know anything of the Virgin Queen it is that she was nothing of the kind. Another is that this was Elizabeth's favourite card, but so far we have been unable to come across any satisfactory explanation of the epithet. Perhaps some learned reader of THE STRAND may be able to elucidate the history of this card.

THE KNAVE OF CLUBS.

Of the knave of clubs—

. . . mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'erthrew,
And mowed down armies in the flights of loo,

there is both comedy and tragedy to be written.

On the 13th of July, 1793, Jean Paul Marat, one of the bloodthirsty triumvirate which ruled France, was seated in a bath in his house, surrounded by papers and various reminders of the Reign of Terror. Amongst these was a pack of Republican cards which had recently appeared, the publisher of which had dedicated them to Marat. One of these, the knave of clubs, he had removed to use as a book-mark. He was suffering from a skin disease contracted in the sewers, which made constant immersion in warm water necessary. Suddenly the door opened to admit a stranger. The stranger was Charlotte Corday, carrying concealed her fatal dagger. After the assassination all the relics of the tragedy were carefully guarded, and are preserved to this day, including Marat's pen and the valet de bâton, who for some time afterwards gave the name of Marat to his race in all parts of Europe.

But long before Marat's day the knave of clubs had a sinister reputation. George Coleman, in his essay on "Cursing and Swearing," suggests that in place of oaths used at the card-table the gamester might be permitted to swear by the knave of clubs or the "Curse of Scotland." At the game of loo Pam is the best card in the pack, as the right bower is at euchre, and when the holder of the ace plays it he always says, "Pam, be civil." The holder of the knave then plays another club if he has one, and allows the ace to make the trick. On one occasion, at a card-party, Lord Palmerston was indulging in some rather violent abuse in the hearing of the Baron de Bunsen, who called out humorously, "This is whist, not loo, but—Pam, be civil!" which sally, we are told, the somewhat acrimonious Foreign Minister took in good part.

THE TEN OF CLUBS.

A ten of clubs of curious pattern, here reproduced, is preserved in Paris as being the first card ever played by Le Grand Monarque, Louis XIV. It is one of a pack especially printed in his honour in 1647, when he was but nine years of age, and the tradition is that

when he cut the pack and turned up "King Pepin," Cardinal Mazarin took this for an omen. When, therefore, the game was over, he drew the card from the pack and preserved it. At his death it was given to the King, and always found a place amongst Royal mementoes until 1789. It was framed in a little gilt frame, and was lately in the possession of the Comtesse d'Eu.

THE NINE OF CLUBS.

The Gentleman and the Beggar Woman.
A Beggarwoman followed a Gentleman that had nose Hose, Crying, G-d preserve your Worshipps Eye sight. I pray G-d bless your Eye-sight, Woman said he, what makes thee pray soe heartily for my Eye sight because said the woman when that fails I doe know how your worshipp will doe to wear Spectacles, the Gent lik'd her fancy soe well, that he flung her half a crown.

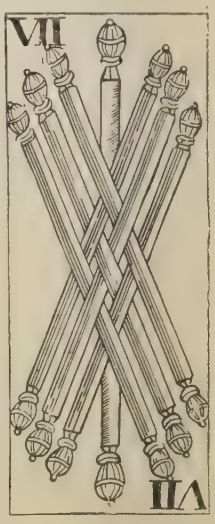
Upon the back of a pictorial nine of clubs long preserved at Strawberry Hill the poet Gay scribbled a couplet from his "Beggar's Opera," added his signature, and gave it to a lady. Many poets have done the same thing before and since: it seems a favourite mode of enshrining couplets and even stanzas for preservation, although nowadays writing on the backs of cards is a far more difficult process than it apparently used to be with our ancestors.

THE EIGHT OF CLUBS.

The only card which is a relic intact of the Spanish Armada—perhaps the only card ever to survive over three centuries of immersion under the ocean—is the eight of clubs. This card was stated, a few years ago, to have been found in a small water-tight box or casket embedded in the shores of Tobermory Bay, together with several coins, a string of beads, and some metal buttons. One cannot but wonder at its history, especially when it is stated that it probably represented a sum of money—perhaps nine doubloons—which its possessor had won from the loser at a game of cards on board ship, it being the custom to give a gauge—what we should call an IOU—in this manner.

THE SEVEN OF CLUBS.

A German named Leuben laid a wager that he would turn up a pack of cards in a certain order, beginning with the seven of clubs. Whether he was weak-minded or only intoxicated at the outset is not known, but he very shortly became insane, and was incarcerated in an asylum with his pack of cards. Here for twenty years he laboured to bring about the combination, devoting ten hours a day to the task. Once, in the seventh year, he had almost succeeded; but not until the four million two hundred and forty-six thousand and twenty-fifth time did complete success crown the poor wretch's efforts.



THE SIX OF CLUBS.

A playing-card collector in New York has a six of clubs which was shot out of a cannon by a Federal gunner into the rebel lines at Richmond. It was not, however, the only card dispatched in this violent and unconventional manner — an entire pack was bound up in wire and cotton wadding and seriously wounded a picket on its arrival. "It struck a stone, and the cards were, in full view of a squad of men dining, broken into two heaps, only the six of clubs uppermost. A cry broke forth, "Clubs are trumps!" the pack was seized and dealt, and Johnny Reb was thanked for one of the most extraordinary and unexpected games of euchre ever played by soldiers or civilians."

THE FIVE OF CLUBS.

The five of clubs is known as "Watson's Card," but considerations of chronology preclude the idea that the name has anything to do with the confidant of the illustrious Sherlock Holmes. Exactly how it came to be bestowed is another of the mysteries of card history, but the eponymous hero is said to be one Watson who, seventy or eighty years ago, won ten thousand pounds at faro through his choice of this card.

THE FOUR OF CLUBS.

By the nickname of the "Devil's Bed-post" the four of clubs is universally known. "It is an unlucky card," writes Mr. W. P. Courtney, "and the dealer who turns it up is always considered as cut off from all chance of winning the game." The four of clubs is also known as "Ned Stokes," and the following explanation of this name is furnished by the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1798. A certain person, the Rev. Edward Stokes, of Blaby, in Leicestershire, had four sons, two of whom, he was in the habit of saying, he had given to God and two to the devil, by which elegant expression he meant that two were clergymen and two were attorneys. One of the latter, Edward Stokes, of Melton Mowbray, was a good whist-player, and known throughout the country as a desirable partner in the game; but he had conceived a ridiculous aversion to the four of clubs, which never failed to show itself on the appearance of that card. Hence it came to be known by the playful title of "Ned Stokes."

On one occasion the four of clubs underwent an extraordinary transformation, according to a once popular legend. It concerns the lawfulness of playing cards on the Sabbath, about which a great deal of discussion has raged for centuries. "I have never played cards on Sunday," declared the narrator, "since this card"—drawing a four of clubs from his pocket—"well, I will tell you the story." It is probably the same story related by Robert Southey and others.

A coterie of "respectable persons" quitted the opera-house late one Saturday night to play faro at a Mrs. Sturt's. The game proceeded for a short time, when a thunder-clap and a slight shock of earthquake disconcerted them. Still they played on, when all at once a player, laying down a club, cried out that it was the colour of blood. The others looked and declared that it was so. A heart was played, and it was black. Under such conditions play was impossible, and Sunday play, which had been visited with such awful portents, was abandoned.

There is another legend noted in one of the novels of Harrison Ainsworth, where the clubs and hearts change colour, but the crime involved in this case was far graver, being no less than murder, to the perpetrator of which everything black seemed crimson, and *vice versa*.

THE THREE OF CLUBS.

For ever linked with the name of the late James Payn is the three of clubs. Payn always called it his lucky card. An ancient card preserved with writing on the back is a three of clubs. The pack of which it formed a part was presented by Lord Dunblane to the Prince of Orange, and played by him on the eve of crossing to England in the memorable year of 1788. After the game was over the Prince returned the pack to the donor, with his autograph on what Tom Hood used playfully to call the "Old Dog Tray."

THE TWO OF CLUBS.

The only notable thing about the deuce of clubs is that it is always considered a sign of five trumps in the dealer's hand. Some few years ago an attempt was made to shatter this superstition, and a large number of Reform Club players were asked for their opinion. Strange to relate, almost without exception they supported it out of their own experience, although not one could offer even a shadow of reason for the fact, which is one of the oddest, as well as the longest-lived, superstitions on record.

"As Far as They Had Got."

A "FOLLOW-MY-LEADER" STORY.

By E. Phillips Oppenheim, W. Pett Ridge, Arthur Morrison, H. A. Vachell, Barry Pain, Charles Garvice, and Richard Marsh.

[In our May number we published an article entitled "A 'Follow-My-Leader' Picture," and in the following pages the same method is applied to the writing of a story, with an extremely interesting result. The story was opened by Mr. E. Phillips Oppenheim, who alone of the contributors was not required to have a complete story outlined in his mind. This opening was then sent to Mr. Pett Ridge, who wrote the next chapter, and also sent a brief statement of the manner in which he thought the whole story might have been completed. These two chapters were then sent on to Mr. Arthur Morrison, who, in the same manner, added his instalment and his idea of the whole story; and so on, chapter by chapter, till the whole was completed. It should, of course, be remembered that each writer had before him merely the preceding chapters of the story, and knew nothing whatever of his predecessors' proposed methods of ending it. These explanations are given as footnotes to each chapter, and will be found most interesting as throwing light upon the methods of work of the various eminent fiction-writers, and the way in which a story evolves itself in such widely divergent manners in different minds.]

CHAPTER I.

By E. Phillips Oppenheim.

THE two young men, complete strangers to one another, exchanged during those few moments a gaze whose intentness seemed to possess some hidden and mysterious quality. Spencer, in flannels and canvas shoes, bare-headed, his sunburnt face streaming with perspiration, paused for a moment, still gripping the pole with which he was propelling his somewhat clumsy craft. The man, a few yards away, who had attracted his attention seemed to have very different ideas of pleasure. Dressed in a spotless suit of white flannels, he was lounging in a wicker chair on the smooth-shaven lawn of a bungalow hung with flowers, whose garden, with its little stone terrace, fronted the stream. He, too, was young and good-looking, but of another type. His lips parted in a faint, good-humoured smile, as Spencer once more raised his pole.

"Hot work, isn't it?" he remarked, lazily.

"Beastly," Spencer replied.

The young man on the lawn touched a glass jug by his side, a jug whose frozen sides suggested ice, and in which green leaves were floating about.

"Care for a drink?" he asked.

Spencer shook his head.

"We've sworn off, my pal and I, till we get her into the broad," he answered. "You haven't a cigarette to spare, I suppose?"

The young man rose from his seat and strolled gracefully down the lawn to the river's edge.

"Catch," he said, and threw the box which had been standing by his side into Spencer's outstretched hands.

"Awfully good of you," the latter declared. "Sure you can spare them?"

The young man nodded.

"Plenty more here," he said. "Good day."

Spencer sighed a little enviously as he settled down once more to his task.

"I never, in the whole of my existence," he exclaimed, "saw a fellow who seemed so jolly well satisfied with life!"

Across the cowslip and buttercup-starred meadows, now knee-deep in the mowing grass, now forcing his reckless way through a clump of bushes, a man was running as one might run behind whom came hot-footed all the strange and terrible shapes begotten of a Dantesque nightmare. Terror, livid and appalling, was in his face. Not all the burning heat could bring a spot of colour to his cheeks. Even his parted lips, through which his breath came in gasps and groans, were white. Once he fell, but rose without pausing, heedless of the blood which dripped from his

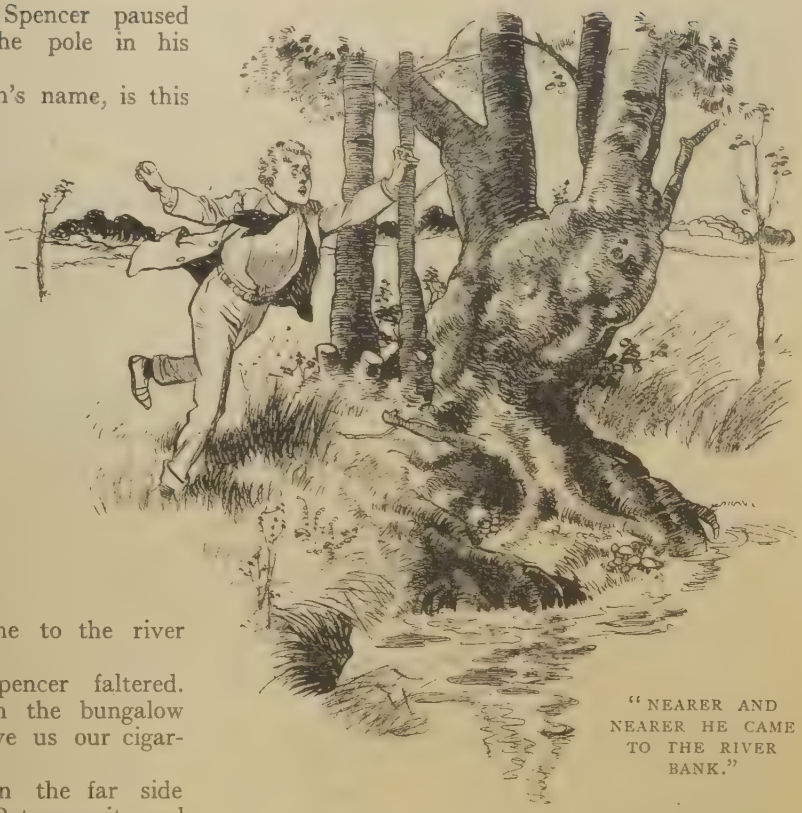
hand and knee. Spencer paused once more with the pole in his hand.

"What, in Heaven's name, is this coming across the meadow?" he exclaimed.

"It's a madman!" his companion cried. "Look! look!"

The man who approached was running now in circles. His hands were raised to the skies, his head thrust forward. Once more he fell, but picked himself up without a moment's hesitation. Nearer and nearer he came to the river bank.

"My God!" Spencer faltered. "It's the man from the bungalow—the man who gave us our cigarettes!"



"NEARER AND NEARER HE CAME TO THE RIVER BANK."

The yawl was on the far side of the stream. Between it and the opposite bank the stream, which had widened considerably, was now about fifteen yards wide. The man who had been running paused for the first time as he reached the brink, but only for a second. Without any attempt at diving he simply threw himself in, face downwards. With a dull splash he disappeared under the green weeds. Spencer, who had been stupefied with amazement, hauled up his pole and stepped on to the side of the boat, prepared to dive. His companion stopped him.

"It's all right, Spencer!" he cried. "He's here."

They dragged him on board—a dripping, wild-looking object. They thrust him into their only seat. He cowered there, gripping its sides, and in his face were the unutterable things. Spencer and his companion, who stood staring at him, felt suddenly that the sun had left the heavens. The pleasant warmth was gone, the humming of insects and the singing of birds had ceased. It was another world from which this creature had come. They both shivered.

"What, in Heaven's name, has happened?" Spencer demanded. "What is the matter with you, man?"

There was no answer. Spencer caught up his pole.

"Let's have her round," he cried. "We'll get back to the bungalow."

Then the stranger broke his silence. He shrank back in his place like some stricken animal. In his eyes the terror blazed forth, a live and awful thing.

"No!"

CHAPTER II.

By W. Pett Ridge.

"Very well, then; we'll take you in to the bank."

"Not there!" he screamed, piteously. "Anywhere else, but not there." He seemed to make a determined effort to pull himself together. "Give me something to smoke." "It will compose what I call my brain."

"One of your own cigarettes?"

He seized the box eagerly, and, turning aside, made a scoop through the contents. They found a clumsy suit of overalls and, landing farther down, he changed rapidly, throwing the damp suit of flannels into the hollow of an old tree.

"Fix up here," he urged, "and let's stroll across to the town, and you give me an opportunity of repaying your kindness by standing

you both tea. My story is in many respects a strange one."

They exchanged a perplexed look as he washed his hands in the stream. The three strolled along the path, that went by the side of a field.

"You think I'm a gentleman," he went on, volubly, "and, of course, I want people to think so. I dress well, and I aspirate my aitches to such an extent that I deceive a lot of people. As a matter of fact, before I came into my fortune I was a clerk. That was why," he beamed, excusingly, "why I was so upset when you talked about taking me in to bank."

"How did you come by your money?" inquired Spencer, interestedly.

"It was at Folkestone I met her," he went on, mopping his forehead, "whilst I was on my holidays."

"Met who?"

"House property she'd got, so far as I could gather, Brondesbury way. The agent was making up to her, but she said she believed in love at first sight, or else not at all. The next morning I had the letter from the lawyers, and, believe me or believe me not"—he raised his bandaged hand impressively—"but since that time she'd gone clean out of my head, until a chance remark of yours brought her back again. 'Awfully good of you,' you said to me, and those were the very words she passed when I paid for her to go down the lift. And now," he shouldered open a gate for them, "now I'd give every shilling of my twenty thousand pounds to see her again. Every penny."

"Braddell," remarked Spencer, excitedly, to his friend, "this is something in your line."

"Tell me," said Braddell, "do you know her name and address?"

"You're cold."

"Do you know the agent's name and address?"

"Very warm," he commented, approvingly. "I made a note of that at the time, and placed it in the cigarette-box I gave you. Having secured possession of it, our task now is an easy one."

"Your task, you mean."

"You can understand my excitement, at any rate. If I'd lost sight of you, my last chance of finding her would have gone. And if you've suffered, as I have, from mothers with daughters who only want a chap because he's come in for a bit of cash, you'll realize, first, why I came down here for quiet; second, why I'm so anxious to find her. If she did love me, undoubtedly she loved me for myself alone. I'll make it worth your while to assist me," he promised. "I sha'n't begrudge a thousand or two."

The two gave a gasp in duet.

"Here we are!" as a lane took them into the main street. "You go on to the Unicorn and order tea and toast for three, whilst I pop in here and buy a hat."

Spencer and Braddell obeyed, consulting eagerly as they went. Coming a few minutes later from the outfitter's shop in a sou'-wester that went well with his suit, the tenant of the bungalow crossed to the clematis-covered house which bore the words: "POLICE-STATION."

He spoke sharply.

"We've met before, perhaps. I am Inspector Wilmerson, of the C.I.D. Very well, then!" without waiting for an answer. "Two sunburnt young men in flannels and canvas shoes are wanted for the Moorgate Street bank robbery. They're about here somewhere. Keep a sharp look-out for them. Good day!"

"Why," cried the young constable, "dang my eyes if I ain't just seen two answering to that yer description making their way 'long to the hotel. And ain't yours a clever disguise too, sir? I reckon I sh'd do pretty well at the Yard myself."

"Go and arrest them," he ordered, "and bring them here. Take handcuffs!" *

CHAPTER III.

By Arthur Morrison.

Meantime, left together, Braddell stared at Spencer, and Spencer lifted his eyebrows and laughed.

"What have we found now?" Spencer remarked. "A madman, an actor, or what? First, on the lawn by his bungalow, a particularly easy-going man of good manners—a gentleman, in two words; then a wild, dancing dervish; and now a very common sort of bounder, who talks about 'repaying' us for hauling him out of the water and putting him into dry clothes by 'standing' us tea—like a beanfeaster!"

"Odd enough," replied Braddell; "but, actor or lunatic, I should say he was a pretty genuinely frightened man when he came bolting across the field. Why, he might have been bitten by the what d'ye call—the Italian spider."

"Tarantula?"

"Yes. It's a nuisance to be stuck here

* The man of the bungalow kept a small map in the cigarette case, giving the exact place of the buried money belonging to the Moorgate Street bank. The local police lock up the two young men, and their efforts, when released, to secure the vanished bungalow man are aided by a renewed acquaintance, in strange surroundings, with the cigarette-case.—W. Pett Ridge.

like this, but I'm rather interested, and there may be fun in seeing it through. We must, in fact, if we want those overalls back—he's pitched his flannels away!"

The coffee-room of the Unicorn had a small window looking over a corner of garden, and a bagatelle-table stood in the light of this window. Spencer took a cue and drove a ball or two idly up the board, while Braddell watched him.

"He's slow in his choice of a hat," said Braddell, presently. "I'll stroll out and look for him."

By the door of the tap-room the landlord stood in whispered consultation with a policeman. Braddell unsuspectingly sought to pass between them, and instantly felt himself seized from both sides—and handcuffed!

"What's the meaning of this?" he demanded, with some difficulty, in his blank astonishment.

"All right, all right," replied the young policeman, grinning and winking; "sort of thing they allus say. You ain't obliged to say nothin', but what you do say'll be took down an' used in evidence. Come along!"

By the time that Braddell had gathered his faculties he was alone in a converted scullery of the little clematis-covered police-station, with bars across the window and a locked door. But in five minutes more the door opened before him and revealed his friend Spencer, handcuffed as he had been and accompanied by the Unicorn landlord and the same constable, reinforced now by a flustered sergeant, with crumbs on his whiskers, relics of a rudely-disturbed meal.

It took a full half-hour of vehement protest ere the sergeant was persuaded to seek confirmation of the prisoners' *bona fides* in the search of the yawl; and it took a little longer still, and it needed telegrams, before the sergeant grew possessed of a suspicion that his subordinate had made the biggest blunder of a somewhat blundersome career. The official information as to the Moorgate Street bank robbery, too, could not, however stretched, be made wholly to agree with the appearance of the young men in custody; while the utter disappearance of the alleged Inspector Wilmerson lent a certain weight to one angry protest of Braddell.

"If there's a man wanted about here," Braddell had repeated again and again, "it is that man in the overalls. Go and get his flannels out of the hollow tree half-way along to the bungalow; and, above all, go to the bungalow itself, man, and don't waste more time. It may be the Moorgate Street robbery, or it may be something else; but, whatever it is, get there quick and find out!"

The sergeant was something less of a fool than his man. He hedged and made apologies. Of course, if his man had been misled, it was only from an excess of zeal; and in any case the gentlemen would understand that he, the sergeant, must keep them in sight till the matter had been cleared up. Had they any objection to going with him and the constable as far as the bungalow they spoke of?

"Objection? Certainly not! We want to go. Let's get along at once. There's an hour gone, and nobody can tell what you've missed. Come along at once. You've seen our letters and card-cases and the things in the yawl—you know we sha'n't run away. Come along, and we'll see it through with you."

A few minutes later the two friends, with the sergeant, his helmet in place and the crumbs gone from his whiskers, and the young constable, his hopes of promotion gone by the board, were hurrying across the meadows toward the bungalow that had seemed so peaceful and innocent a retreat when they had last seen it. They came in view of the place from the back, and they spread wide as they approached, the better to intercept any retreat. Not a sound came from the bungalow, and nobody was in sight. They drew nearer, passed the flower-beds, and emerged on the sloping lawn. There stood the small garden-table, with the glass jug still on it, the wicker chair overturned by its side. The white-painted door of the bungalow was open wide, and as they approached the porch something on that white-painted door caused Spencer, who was ahead, to stop and point, turning with wide eyes to the others. There, in the middle of the upper panel, was the print of a human hand—in blood! *

* The two perpetrators of the bank robbery have been lying in retreat at the bungalow. The chase is hot, and the cleverer thief, never yet convicted and wholly unsuspected, fears detection through his companion, an old convict. He resolves to murder him, thus to get rid of an inconvenient and dangerous partner and monopolize the plunder. Having attacked him from behind in the bungalow and left him for dead, he is disturbed by the approach of the boat. Fearing someone may land, he stations himself on the lawn and behaves as calmly as is described in the opening. The boat passes on. The man in the house revives, seizes a poker, and, covered with blood, staggers out, leaving the print of his hand on the door as he passes. He strikes the cool thief on the head, and the latter, suddenly confronted with the ghastly figure of his associate—a bigger man and a far more desperate character than himself—runs wildly and erratically (because of the blow on the head). The other fellow, badly hurt and seeing strangers, fears to follow far. The thief given refuge in the boat invents a muddled yarn, and realizing that it *is* muddled plays up to the character of a crazy Cockney, and gets the two witnesses in the boat held up by the police while he bolts. After this, the story may take any one of a dozen courses or more.—ARTHUR MORRISON.

CHAPTER IV.

By Horace Annesley Vachell.

Spencer exclaimed loudly: "I can swear that wasn't there when he gave me the cigarettes."

Braddell laughed.

"My dear fellow, the door was open. The hand is painted on it, excellently painted too, and recognizable from the river."

"Things seem quiet enough here," growled the sergeant, as he entered the bungalow. Braddell glanced for a moment at the iced drink on the wicker table, the overturned chair, and a newspaper lying upon the grass. He picked up the newspaper and followed the others into the bungalow. Two rooms in perfect order met his eyes. Behind these was a cooking-shed containing a gasolene stove. Everything inside the bungalow and the shed indicated exquisite neatness and cleanliness, not merely the neatness of the bachelor accustomed to camping-out, but the meticulous daintiness which expresses subtly a woman's love of her habitat.

"Nothing here," said the sergeant.

"Nobody," amended Braddell. "Did you expect to find somebody, sergeant?"

"I thought it possible."

"Consider the facts. Hardly had my friend and I come to the conclusion that the tenant of this bungalow was seemingly the happiest and most contented of mortals, when we see him tearing across that field like a dervish."

"Genuinely frightened, too," added Spencer. "He'd turned from a pretty shade of pink to the colour of skilly!"

"Exactly. What could have frightened him so badly? He was not acting then, although he acted afterwards, and badly, too. His cock-and-bull story about being a clerk and in love with a nameless woman was quite unconvincing. We left him sitting in front of an iced drink, which I notice to be untouched—odd that!—and reading this paper."

"Ah!" said the sergeant. "You mean, sir, that something he read in the paper must have scared him."

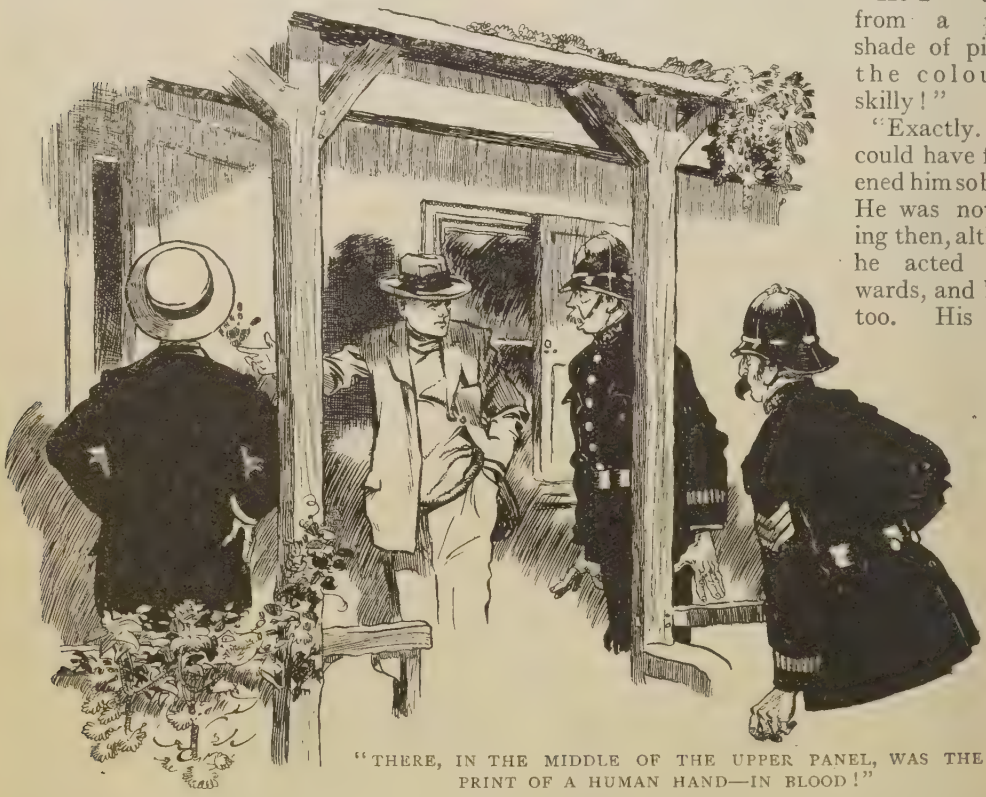
"*I* have found the item, I think," said Braddell, as he handed the paper to the professional.

Spencer said with pride:—

"My friend, Mr. Braddell, is not altogether an amateur. He belongs to the *Criminologists*, a dining-club made up of men interested in crime. Several K.C.'s are members."

"There's a column about the Moorgate Street bank robbery," said the sergeant.

"Which accounts for his mentioning it later. Look through the 'Agony' column, sergeant."



"THERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE UPPER PANEL, WAS THE PRINT OF A HUMAN HAND—IN BLOOD!"

"I have it, sir." He read aloud: "'Red Hand. Your hiding-place is discovered. Bolt at once.'"

"By Jove, he did!" exclaimed Spencer.

"We are wasting our time here," said the sergeant, irritably.

"Not altogether," replied Braddell. "May I suggest that you leave your man here to see if anybody comes, rather thirsty, to enjoy that drink?"

"Remain here," said the sergeant, addressing the constable.

"Before we leave," murmured Braddell, suavely, "I should like to open that trunk, which I perceive to be locked. No doubt, sergeant, it has not escaped your eye that there is neither shaving-brush nor shaving-soap on the washing-stand."

The sergeant coloured.

"I don't mention all I see," he remarked, in an injured tone. He bent down and wrenched open the trunk. Spencer, peeping over his shoulder, whistled. The trunk was full of a woman's clothing.

"I thought there was a woman in this," said the sergeant. "The sooner we lay hands on the man the better."

"A bungalow built for two," murmured Braddell, absently.

Leaving the constable in charge, the three men hastened back to the town, taking the tow-path as being the shortest way. At the first bend in the river Braddell halted and laughed.

"We now know," he affirmed, with conviction, "where the young gentleman really is." He smiled genially at the sergeant and pointed down the long reach ahead.

"Where?" asked the sergeant.

"On board our yawl."

Spencer laughed also.

"I don't see the joke," said the sergeant.

"I don't see the yawl," added Spencer.

"The yawl," replied Braddell, "is running down the estuary on an ebb tide, and the joke is on—us."

"The beggar got us arrested so as to commandeer our boat," said Spencer. "Clever chap, eh, sergeant?"

"Tub like that can't have gone far," said the sergeant, hopefully. Obviously, the young gentleman was no ordinary criminal.

"Tub yourself!" thought Spencer, with a scornful glance at the sergeant's rotundities. Then he heard Braddell's pleasant voice saying:—

"I suggest, sergeant, that we examine the young gentleman's flannels. They may be marked."

"He changed behind those willows," said Spencer, "and stuffed the wet clothes into that old pollard."

A moment later Braddell was thrusting his hand into the hollow of the tree. He flung upon the grass the sodden flannels and a bundle of wet linen. With a smile he held up an unmistakable garment.

"I am sure, sergeant, that this is no surprise for you. The young gentleman who was too modest to change before us is a young—lady!" *

CHAPTER V.

By Barry Pain.

"This," said the sergeant, frankly, "is getting a bit beyond me."

"What do you mean to do?" asked Spencer.

"Get back to the station and get on the 'phone. I can have our men on the look-out for that yawl all the way along. By the time we get the yawl we get the young lady, don't we, sir?"

"I presume so," said Spencer.

"I don't," said Braddell. "Well, get on to the station, sergeant, and we'll go back to the bungalow. What about your man there?"

The sergeant caressed his whiskers thoughtfully. "Well," he said, "we're short-handed."

"Very well," said Braddell. "We'll send him back and remain there ourselves until this evening. Did you say that you meant to have a constable sleeping at the bungalow to-night?"

"If I did not, it was in my mind."

"Good. You might engage bedrooms for us to-night at the Unicorn. It will be all on your way."

They went back to the bungalow and dismissed the constable, who was rapidly developing into a young man with a grievance.

Spencer stretched himself at full length on the lawn. "And what do we do now?" he asked.

* The young woman is not a criminal of sanguine hue, but a modern miss who has bolted from an irascible guardian to escape a marriage of convenience, and has donned trousers so as to avoid attracting attention as a pretty girl alone in a bungalow. Upon the morning when the story opens she is expecting her lover, who will recognize the bungalow as he punts down the river by the red hand painted on the door, a happy symbol, inasmuch as the lover is a baronet, albeit rather impecunious. They have corresponded—since the young lady left home—by means of the Agony column in the *Daily Mail*. The young lady, not quite of age, is a ward in Chancery, and the moment she is of age she hopes to marry her baronet, enjoying the while a quiet life in the bungalow, punctuated by visits from her beloved. The constable left in charge arrests the guardian and complications follow, including the capture of the runaway, who finds herself at the mercy of wind and tide. Braddell plays the familiar part of Deus ex machina, and true love triumphs. —H. A. Vachell.

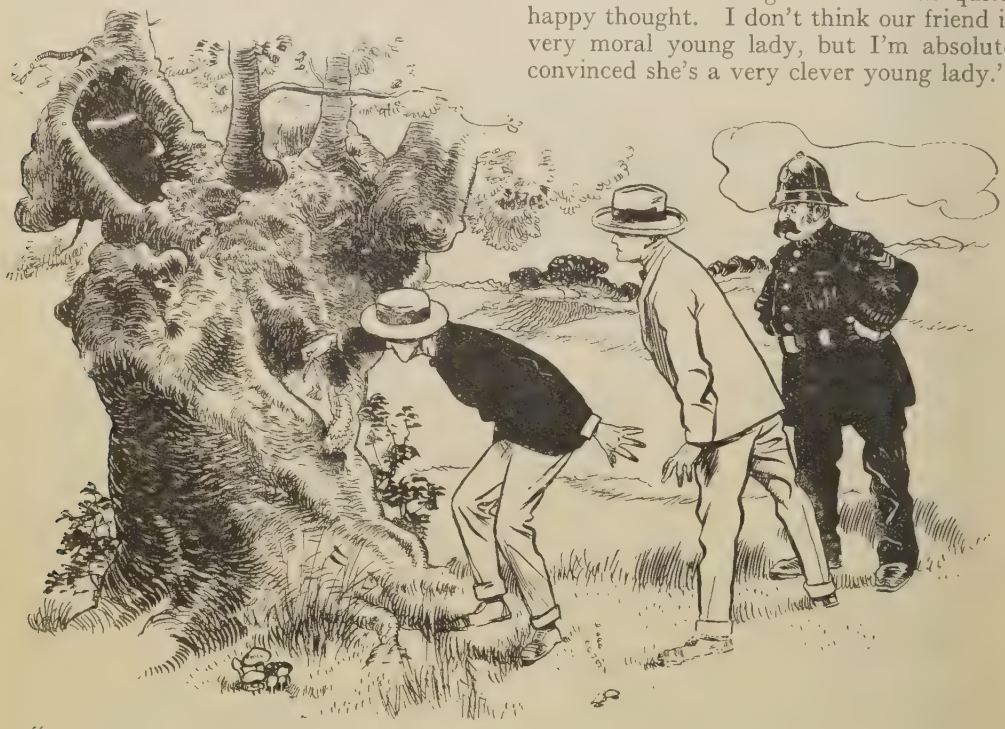
"I'm going to feed the dicky-birds," said Braddell.

Spencer sat up. "Have you gone mad?" he said.

"Wait and see, as they say in another place."

"Great Scot!" said Spencer. "And that was the stuff the young lady wanted me to drink!"

"Quite so," said Braddell. "Prussic acid smells very much like Kirschwasser. The addition of the borage and ice was quite a happy thought. I don't think our friend is a very moral young lady, but I'm absolutely convinced she's a very clever young lady."



"A MOMENT LATER BRADDELL WAS THRUSTING HIS HAND INTO THE HOLLOW OF THE TREE."

Braddell went laughing into the house, and returned with a piece of bread in his hand. He picked up the glass jug.

"Smell that," he said to Spencer, "and tell me what you make of it."

Spencer smelt it diligently.

"Cup of sorts, I suppose, and the young lady's rather overdone the Kirschwasser. The thing reeks of it. I'll just taste it and——"

Braddell took the jug out of his hand. "Half a minute," he said. He poured some of the contents of the jug on to the piece of bread and then broke it up and scattered it at the far end of the lawn.

"Bet you the birds don't touch it," said Spencer. "They've plenty of better grub this weather."

"Oh, you can depend on the sparrows," said Braddell.

And presently a couple of sparrows fluttered down on to the lawn and tackled the crumbs vigorously. In a few seconds they rolled over dead.

"Well, now, Braddell," said Spencer, "what do you make of it so far?"

"I can only see what is perfectly obvious. She was in hiding—from whom I do not know. She wanted her hiding-place to be easily distinguished by someone coming up the water. For whom she was waiting I do not know. There you have it. There was some person from whom she wished to hide, and there was some person by whom she wished to be found—hence the red hand painted on the door. But there is a further complication that I have not yet reached. When we saw her running across the meadow she was mad with terror. There is no doubt about it. Why? And what was it she took out from that box of cigarettes she had given us? The game of hide and seek is obvious, but there must be a second complication. It is quite possible, by the way, that when she offered you that drink she mistook you for somebody else."

"But what's the key to the second complication?"

"Can't say. But this is the key to the bureau in the drawing-room. At any rate, it fits it. Quite a common lock. I tried it when I went in for the bread. Come and investigate."

"I say," said Spencer, "what business have we got with her bureau?"

"Hang it all!" said Braddell. "What business has she got with our boat?

"By the way," went on Braddell, as they walked back into the house together, "she did not fling herself into the water because she was terrified nor because she wished to commit suicide. People who want to drown themselves don't do it where there are two lusty young men waiting to fish them out again. She wanted to be fished out. You can bet on that, at any rate. I wish I had her lightning rapidity in plan and execution. I should be a great man, Spencer." *

CHAPTER VI.

By Charles Garvice.

With not unreasonable nervousness Braddell unlocked the bureau, Spencer looking over his shoulder with feverish curiosity. The thing unlocked quite easily. Braddell threw up the lid, and Spencer exclaimed with amazement, for, quite uncovered, were a number of bags such as are used by banks for gold. There could be no doubt about the contents, for one of the bags was open, revealing a mass of sovereigns. Beside the bags was a quantity of bank-notes, and tucked away in the corner was an old stable cap, with one end of a crape mask still attached to it.

The two men fell back and stared at each other.

"Great heavens!" gasped Spencer. "There must be thousands of pounds there! We've come upon the loot of a gang of thieves."

He looked round the neatly-furnished room, through the door at the beautiful and peaceful scene. The whole place in its loveliness and serenity was absolutely incongruous with so mean and sordid a crime as bank-cribbing.

"It's — it's a mystery!" exclaimed Spencer, dropping on to a chair and wiping his brow.

"Nothing of the kind," said Braddell, quietly. "It's all perfectly plain and simple. Some of the gang, two of them, perhaps—the clever young lady and a man, probably—have been using this bungalow as a kind of screen and blind. No doubt they've been living here for months, leading the kind of simple life which would mislead anyone. For who would suspect a young girl—and her husband, probably—dawdling through existence in such circumstances as these, of being concerned in a conspiracy to rob a bank? And, still more, who would think of searching for the stolen money in such a place as this? It was a very pretty plant, and I can't for the life of me understand why it failed. One would have thought it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have got the loot away by boat. I think I could have done it."

"Something must have disturbed them," said Spencer. "Something evidently did upset *her*, for she was mad with terror when we saw her tearing down the lawn. What was it?"

"Something she saw, something she heard," said Braddell. "It may have been the red hand on the door. It may have been a warning signal, the imitated note of a bird, a faint cooee, which we didn't notice, but which she heard immediately after we had gone."

"What's to be done?" asked Spencer, staring at the precious contents of the bureau.

"I'll go and fetch the police to take this stuff away. You stay here and mount guard over it," said Braddell.

"No; I'll go," said Spencer, a little paler than he had been before, "and you mount guard. No; you sha'n't run any risk, old man. We'll both go. No one is likely to interfere with this stuff for the short time we shall be absent. To be quite frank, I couldn't leave you alone here. This place, the whole thing, is getting on my nerves."

Braddell re-locked the bureau, and they set out at a sharp trot for the station.

"What I can't understand," said Spencer, "is that poisoned cup. Whom was it meant for, and why did she offer it to us? No object in killing a couple of chaps she'd never seen before."

"I don't know," said Braddell, musingly. "If she'd done for both of us it would have been easy to have pushed us overboard, seized the yawl, and escaped."

"Ingenious, but a trifle risky," commented Spencer, with a shake of the head. "One may go in for bank-cribbing, but draw the line at murder. Here we are. They seem

* The lady on the lawn was the head and brains of a gang of thieves. The bungalow in which she was taking refuge was haunted. Her terror was in consequence of this and genuine. Others of her gang were to have joined her at the bungalow, and she was waiting for them when she received the warning that the detectives were on her track. The poisoned drink was intended for the detectives.—Barry Pain.

in a state of excitement. I'll bet they'll lose their heads altogether when we show them what we've found."

The sergeant stared when Braddell curtly requested him to accompany them back to the bungalow and to bring a small sack; but Braddell refused any explanation, and the sergeant and a constable—the latter with the sack over his arm—returned with the two young men to the bungalow. With a gesture that was instinctively dramatic Braddell unlocked the bureau, threw up the lid, and, with his eyes fixed on the sergeant, said:—

"Put it in the sack."

"Put what, sir?" demanded the sergeant, staring amazedly.

Braddell turned his eyes swiftly to the open bureau and saw that it was empty. He was too thunderstruck to utter a word, and it was Spencer who gasped out:—

"That thing was full of notes and gold when we left a quarter of an hour ago."

The sergeant looked from Braddell to Spencer with a surprise which gradually gave place to a mixture of suspicion and pity.

"There's nothing there now, sir," he said, as he swept his hand round the inside of the bureau. "It's quite empty; not even a scrap of paper or a—hairpin. Sure you saw it, sir?"

"Sure!" exclaimed Spencer, indignantly. "Do you think we've taken leave of our senses?"

"Well, sir, you've 'ad an upsetting time," responded the sergeant, apologetically.

"Someone has been here," said Braddell, suddenly; "someone strong enough to carry off the money. They can't have gone far; there must be some traces."

He sprang to the door and, bending down, examined the gravel path; but it had been closely rolled and neatly swept, and there were no traces of footsteps. But a little farther on he found, on the edge of the grass, the impress of a man's shoe, a boating shoe which had been recently whitened, for there was a speck or two of pipeclay on the edge of the footprint.

"Come along," he cried, in a voice trembling with excitement.

They followed him as he tracked the footprints. They went straight for the shrubbery at a little distance from the bungalow. Braddell stopped here and pointed to the bush in front of him. Some of the twigs had been broken, as if a person had rushed through the bush, heedless of where he was going.

"Better go round," he said. "We won't disturb this."

They found an opening a little lower down in the shrubbery, and Braddell cautiously entered, signing to the others to keep back. They waited almost breathlessly; then suddenly they heard a sharp, low cry from Braddell, and the next moment he came out, clutching the branches on each side of him as if for support. His face was deathly white, and he gazed over their heads as if he were obsessed by some horrible sight.*

CHAPTER VII.

By Richard Marsh.

"Pardon me." A man had stepped out from among the bushes who was regarding them with a smile. "Excuse me, gentlemen, this is all right as far as it goes, but the point is how far does it go? That's the point."

"There's a dead body lying on the ground where that man's just come from," Braddell stammered to the sergeant. "I saw it with my own eyes."

"Of course you did, and a very nice one it is."

"What fiend in human shape," cried Braddell, facing the grinning stranger, "have we got here?"

"That's the point, as I was about to remark. "How far have we got? I killed him——"

"You killed him? You killed the man who is lying there? You admit it?"

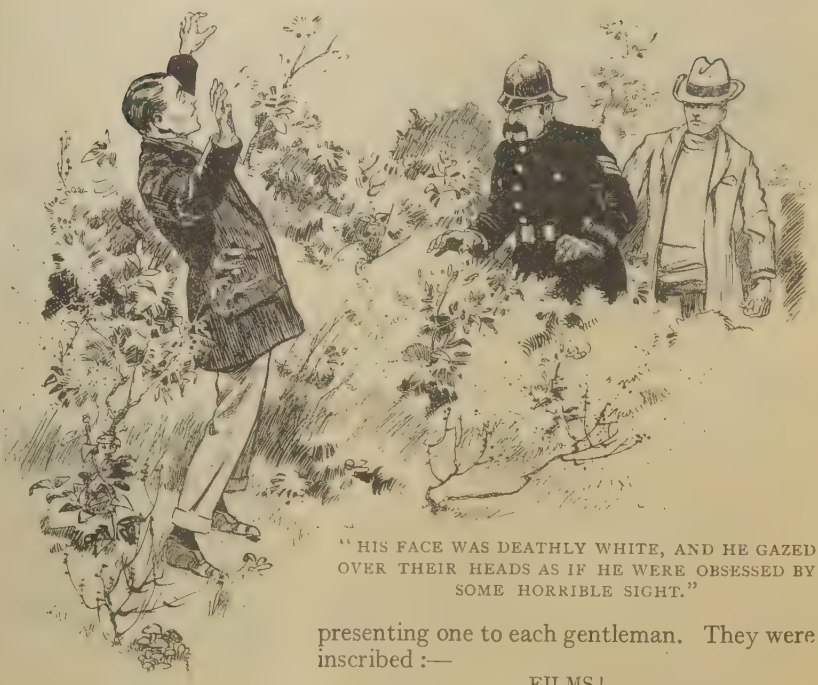
"Certainly I killed him; that's the idea. I gave him five blows with a hatchet. While he was struggling for life he caught hold of whatever he could, and that's his bloody hand which you see upon the door-post. She saw it, the young lady who was dressed as a gent, and she did a bunk. Half mad wth terror she was; we'd got her just right—we wanted to get her like that, you know; into the water she goes, then you come on the scene, and that's as far as we've got."

"It seems to me that you've got some

* The girl, a member of a good family, had fallen into the hands of a professional thief, a handsome, fascinating scoundrel. The two had been concerned in the bank robbery, the proceeds of which they had secreted in the bungalow, where they had been living for some time. They had arranged to meet at the bungalow, whence they were to escape in disguise. The girl had put on a man's flannel boating suit and was awaiting her accomplice when Spencer and Braddell's yawl came up. After they had gone she went to the house, and saw the red hand, a warning sign, on the door. She was about to take flight when she came upon the body of her accomplice lying in the shrubbery behind the bungalow. He had committed suicide by drinking the cup, which she did not know contained poison when she offered it to Spencer. A third accomplice who had been watching had made off with the contents of the bureau while Spencer and Braddell had gone for the police. The girl and the rest of the gang were captured and sent to penal servitude.—Charles Garvice.

distance." Spencer was surveying the stranger with a glance which, perhaps, insufficiently showed, his bewilderment. "Are you a murderer, or merely a criminal lunatic, or what are you, sir?"

"Yes, what am I? That's another point. We haven't got so far as that." Taking off his straw hat, the stranger passed a blue silk handkerchief across his brow. "Of course, the idea was that I was to cut her throat, drag her out of the water by the hair of her head, and, as she lay gasping for breath on the bank, slit it from ear to ear; but, as I was about to remark, that's what we haven't quite got to."



"HIS FACE WAS DEATHLY WHITE, AND HE GAZED OVER THEIR HEADS AS IF HE WERE OBSESSED BY SOME HORRIBLE SIGHT."

"Haven't you? You may thank your lucky stars that your carnival of crime was not played out." Spencer's tones were portentous. "Sergeant, do you happen to have a pair of handcuffs in your pocket? If ever there was an occasion on which they were required, surely this is one."

"I'm thinking I've met this chap before," the sergeant remarked.

"You have, sergeant, when I gave you half a crown to smash my friend's head open with your truncheon; then we had a hand-to-hand fight, after I'd thrown my wife out of the window."

"I remember," agreed the constable; "I remember very well. You made that half a crown five shillings."

"It was worth it; you put up something like a fight; you'd have killed me if my friend hadn't thrown you out of the window after my wife. Excuse me, gentlemen, but it occurs to me"—the stranger turned to Braddell and Spencer with the friendliest possible gesture—"that this may require a little explanation; something in your attitude suggests it. Perhaps you will find it here."

From a letter-case he took two cards, presenting one to each gentleman. They were inscribed:—

FILMS!
THE FINEST THE WORLD PRODUCES!!
Startlers!!!
Screamers!!!!
Scorchers!!!!!
Screechers!!!!!!
More Terror, Tears and Laughter to the square inch than those of any other firm in the Universe!
The Very Latest Cinematograph Company, 3, 5 & 7, Corkcutter Alley, St. Martin's Lane. Representative, JACK THOMPSON.

"That's me, gentlemen. I'm Jack Thompson, very much at your service. We were rehearsing a little idea in which the intention was to cram more varieties of bloodshed and crime than have ever been crammed into twelve hundred feet before—a film full of human interest, with a heart-to-heart ending. And when you came upon the scene that was as far as we'd got."

"And why," exclaimed a voice behind them, "you wish to waste good Kirschwasser on making two sparrows dead drunk is beyond me altogether."

The speaker picked up two sparrows which were making some rather singular attempts to walk across the lawn.

"Drunk?" murmured Spencer. "I thought they were dead."

"Of course you did; you'd think anything—you're such a nice young man." The speaker plunged a pair of hands into his two trouser pockets. "You thought I was a man. Well, I'm not, I'm a girl; and that's as far as I've got."

Does it Pay to Back Horses?

THE OPINIONS OF EXPERTS.

[The experts whose opinions have been asked on this subject have been chosen as representative of the various classes whose experience carries weight—the mathematician, the owner of horses, the trainer, the jockey, the professional backer, the bookmaker, and the racing journalist. These opinions are most varied and interesting, and it will be noticed that they all agree on one point, namely, that the ordinary backer is the support of the ring, and is, therefore, more or less of a "mug."]

SIR HIRAM MAXIM (Mathematical Expert).

IT depends altogether upon the standpoint from which it is viewed. There must of necessity be more than one party to a bet. The bookie bets that a horse will not win and makes money by it, and the common or garden gambler bets that the horse will win and loses money by it. Many bookmakers have become immensely rich by betting, and this is proof that money can be made by betting, providing that the business is conducted in a skilful manner. It is impossible for anyone to make money on a bet unless someone else loses it. Betting does not increase the amount of wealth in the country, but rather diminishes it. The bookmakers of England must make several millions a year out of their business, and every penny of this is won from the unthinking public, who are quite satisfied to play at a losing game, providing that they have the remote chance of winning more than their stake. If it were possible to discover a system that would beat the bookmakers, then the bookmakers would very soon alter their rules of the game so as to meet the new state of affairs.

THE EARL OF CLARENDON.

I DO not suppose that from any point of view betting pays. It can hardly be supposed that either the *auri sacra fames*, or the determination of either the one or the other of the "contracting parties" to get a little the best of the bargain, can be of any benefit to

character, while I have never heard of any *backer of horses*, at any rate, ever having amassed wealth. Although it may be for a short time his speculations have been successful, yet in the long run his losses outbalance his gains. Indeed, if they did not do so, how would the betting ring exist?

Mr. DANNY MAHER (the Famous Jockey).

SINCE jockeys are not allowed to bet, it is difficult for me to express an opinion. As a mere looker-on, so far as betting is concerned, I see no reason why betting should not pay. In a country like this, where racing is strictly and fairly carried out and where everything possible is done to ensure the best horse winning, to win at betting becomes a matter of judgment. But to be able to judge the comparative merits of various horses in a

given race, at given weights, is not always easy, for the reason that horses, like human beings, do not run with a machine-like evenness. Horses have their good and bad days. Every racing season many examples occur, especially among young horses, of animals that beat each other under apparently even conditions, one winning one day and being beaten by another, perhaps the very next week, which was "down the course" before. This may be accounted for either by the "mood" of a horse or the improvement from training—different horses improving at different rates according to the training and according to their temperament—or even by the mood or condition of the jockey. For jockeys have their good and bad days too, and are seldom right at the top of their form every time. It is these variations that lend uncertainty to betting and give the bookmaker his chance, in my opinion.

The Views of a Professional Backer.

SPEAKING from the point of view, purely and simply, of the punter—that is to say, the general run of punters—it must be obvious that betting does not pay. Otherwise the supply of bookmakers would speedily run short! If I were asked to answer the question "*Can* betting pay?" I should give a very different answer. Betting is a business on the punter's side just as much as it is on the layer's side. It requires experience, discrimination, self-control, and keen observation. Almost anyone who is prepared to treat betting on horses as a business, and devotes as much time and thought to it as is devoted to achieving success in any other profession, can make money. However hard they work, men sometimes fail in business. It is so with the professional backers. They are not infallible. But most of them make a living, and many of them make a good income.

The crowd that throngs the racecourse is, for the most part, out for a day's sport, with the exciting prospect of "making a bit"—with luck. They bet on every race without any knowledge or previous observation to guide them, or follow the advice of a tipster who is forced to give selections whether he knows anything or not, simply because the public demand it of him. To win for any length of time, when betting in this indiscriminate way, is impossible. Men often have a run of luck, it is true. I have known a man win week after week for six weeks on end, although he hardly knew a horse from a mule, and was guided simply by his own "fancy." The last state of such a man is always worse than the first. Money won so easily is easily spent, and when the tide turns, as turn it must, wild plunges to recover lead to loss, and sometimes to ruin. Human nature is what puts money in the bookmakers' pockets. The punter cannot wait to bet on some horse which has an obviously good chance, or about which he really has information. The moment the horses assemble for a race a wild desire to gamble comes over him. He cannot bear to see them run unless he has something on. The result is that by the time the race arrives in which the horse he came to back is engaged he has nothing left.

The man who makes punting pay is he with an iron control over himself. He is content to wait for days, and often for weeks, without a bet at all, although all that time he is attending meetings and keeping his eyes open for likely winners in the future. Then, when his chance comes, he has not frittered away his money, but is able to put it down. If the ordinary punter put on all the money in one race that he fritters away in six he would stand to win a goodly sum at no greater risk. It is hard enough to find one winner, let alone half-a-dozen!

"CAPTAIN COE," of the "Star."

THE greatest charm about betting on horse-racing lies in the bed-rock fact that it is possible to win on every race if you manage to pick the right one. I remember well the case of one racecourse tout who, some years ago, went right through the card on a certain day and ran ten shillings into three hundred and fifty pounds! On another day I gave every winner at York and Salisbury but one, and the loser was, unfortunately, the "nap." Scores of little punters had the "nap" in doubles, trebles, and accumulators, not one of which synchronized, to the great joy of the bookies.

Backing, as carried on by *professional* punters, pays well; indeed, the late R. H. Fry once told me the professional backer had a better chance than the bookies, and I may add that during my experience I have only known one big professional backer who disappeared. He lost eighteen thousand pounds at one Epsom meeting, and had the money to pay with; but he preferred to retire into private life to paying up, and I believe he purchased an annuity with his capital.

I do not bet myself; but once when I ran horses I put five pounds on one of them at the instigation of one of the biggest legal luminants of that day, who witnessed the trial. My horse was beaten in the race by

a head, but, as it was a selling event, I got a share of a big surplus.

I feel it right to add, in conclusion, that I am not qualified to properly answer the question.

Mr. D. M. GANT (the Well-Known Starting-Price Bookmaker).

At the present time it would be difficult to say which of the two—the layer or the backer—has the advantage. Telephones and telegrams, together with the extraordinary competition among newspapers in the purveyance of racing information, have rendered bookmaking profits a matter of slight percentage, and if the bookmaker is to keep going it must be on the strength of almost unlimited resources and a huge connection.

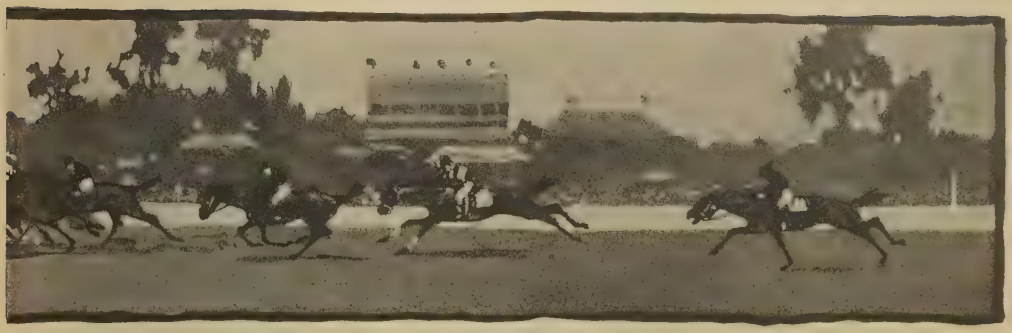
It has certainly paid me, but the profits I have made from starting-price bookmaking cannot be termed extravagant considering the amount of capital that has from time to time been requisitioned to develop the business—and maintain it—on a sound footing. I am confident that if I had speculated a similar amount in judiciously advertising such articles as soap, pickles, or mustard I should have received a far better return for my money, and, as I am fortunate enough to possess very considerable interests now in certain well-known commercial undertakings, I am not speaking without experience.

Some twenty years ago I expended a very large amount of money in advertising certain bookmaking innovations which were then quite original, but have since become almost general. The "No limit, no commission" system of betting was among these. I commenced to pay the full starting-price, no matter at what odds the horse started, although most bookmakers had at that time a limit of ten to one on small races, and they deducted anything from two and a half to five per cent. from clients' winnings. This move resulted to me in an enormous increase of business, but it must not be thought that a large clientele necessarily means big profits. You may hear and read of people who back horses in a sublime spirit of indifference as to whether they win or lose—just for the sport of the thing, in fact—and if any amount of advertising could secure for the bookmaker a large number of these as clients his fortune would be assured. As far as my experience goes, however, such people do not exist!

Speaking from the starting-price bookmaker's point of view I must point out that this is a very different thing to betting on the course, where a book can be made on each race to ensure a profit, and commissions can be refused if there is too much money for a particular horse. The starting-price bookmaker is in quite a different position. He must accept bets right up to the time of the start in perfect ignorance as to the state of the market, or whether any horse or horses are being backed at the last moment. He is, therefore, prevented from covering himself against loss. I have myself been through periods of great stress and strain through the victory of certain horses which, while popular with the "stay-at-home" punter, have been little supported on the course, and have consequently started at a long price. These and similar trials can only be supported by having a large enough cash balance available to meet all contingencies, and it is only under these conditions and by careful attention to business that starting-price bookmaking can be made to pay.

Mr. JAMES H. SMITH ("Vigilant," of the "Sportsman").

The question is one I should be chary of treating from a journalistic point of view. "Does betting pay?" It depends on the speculator and his ability to beat the market. In a word, as in everything else, cleverness prevails, but to anyone not thoroughly *au fait* with racing in all its intricacies on the one hand and the various and rapid changes in the market, my direct advice would be "*Don't!*"



Colonel W. HALL WALKER, M.P.

You ask me for my opinion, "Does betting pay?" I presume you mean, does it pay that portion of the public who back horses?

The bookmakers' profits I know nothing of beyond that I share the almost universal opinion that they do win, and that largely, as the odds are so much in their favour. As regards the backers of horses, probably a small proportion do win money regularly; but these are professional backers, who go to the meetings regularly and work in a businesslike way. Apart from the before-mentioned, I have no doubt that the vast majority of backers of horses lose money at the game; but the same can be said about the participators in every other kind of amusement or sport, as none of these can be carried on without cost.

I have previously publicly expressed my approval of the pari-mutuel system of betting, as giving the ordinary backer a much fairer chance than he at present enjoys, and at the same time securing substantial financial aid to the horse supply of this country.

Mr. ROBERT S. SIEVIER (whose famous mare, Sceptre, was such a popular idol).

You have put before me a proposition, "Does betting pay?" The obvious answer is, "Yes—it pays the bookmaker." There are also many backers who make it pay, but it is clear that several must lose, or bookmakers would not exist. One might say, "Does speculation on the Stock Exchange pay?" But against this there is a very large amount annually to be set aside for the stockbrokers and jobbers. To my mind, betting is the fairest mode of speculation, and certainly the most honourable. One's liabilities are described as debts of honour, and this arises from the fact that bets are made by word of mouth, without witnesses, and no documents are signed by either party. Yet there are fewer disputes brought before Tattersall's Committee, which is the tribunal for hearing such cases, than there are perhaps in connection with any other transactions where money passes. The man who loses by backing horses is invariably the one who goes after his money. Temperament is the qualification that is required, with a fair quantum of philosophy thrown in. The majority of men fail to blend the two, and are too eager to regain their losses when they are out of touch with Dame Fortune. I am ready to admit that temptation to liquidate a lost bet by winning another is great, but the man who bets should be prepared to lose and pay instead of speculating with only hope for a foundation.

Mr. LEOPOLD DE ROTHSCHILD.

I can only say that I should be very sorry to encourage anyone to bet with a view to making money. Nay, more, I would discourage everyone from betting in any way, except as a pastime.

"MANNERS MAKYTH MAN"

BY

W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

THE night-watchman appeared to be out of sorts. His movements were even slower than usual, and, when he sat, the soap-box seemed to be unable to give satisfaction. His face bore an expression of deep melancholy, but a smouldering gleam in his eye betokened feelings deeply moved.

"Play-acting I don't hold with," he burst out, with sudden ferocity. "Never did. I don't say I ain't been to a theayter once or twice in my life, but I always come away with the idea that anybody could act if they liked to try. It's a kid's game, a silly kid's game, dressing up and pretending to be somebody else."

He cut off a piece of tobacco and, stowing it in his left cheek, sat chewing, with his lack-lustre eyes fixed on the wharves across the river. The offensive antics of a lighterman in mid-stream, who nearly fell overboard in his efforts to attract his attention, he ignored.

I might ha' known it, too, he said, after a long silence. If I'd only stopped to think, instead o' being in such a hurry to do good to others, I should ha' been all right, and the pack o' monkey-faced swabs on the *Lizzie and Annie* wot calls themselves sailormen would 'ave had to 'ave got something else to laugh about. They've told it in every pub for 'arf a mile round, and last night, when I went into the Town of Margate to get a drink, three chaps climbed over the partition to 'ave a look at me.

It all began with young Ted Sawyer, the mate o' the *Lizzie and Annie*. He calls himself a mate, but if it wasn't for 'aving the skipper for a brother-in-law 'e'd be called something else, very quick. Two or three times we've 'ad words over one thing and

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another, and the last time I called 'im something that I can see now was a mistake. It was one o' these 'ere clever things that a man don't forget, let alone a lop-sided monkey like 'im.

That was when they was up time afore last, and when they made fast 'ere last week I could see as he 'adn't forgotten it. For one thing he pretended not to see me, and, arter I 'ad told him wot I'd do to him if 'e ran into me agin, he said 'e thought I was a sack o' potatoes taking a airing on a pair of legs wot somebody 'ad throwed away. Nasty tongue 'e's got; not clever, but nasty.

Arter that I took no notice of 'im, and, o' course, that annoyed 'im more than anything. All I could do I done, and 'e was ringing the gate-bell that night from five minutes to twelve till ha'-past afore I heard it. Many a night-watchman gets a name for going to sleep when 'e's only getting a bit of 'is own back.

We stood there talking for over 'arf an hour arter I 'ad let 'im in. Leastways, he did. And whenever I see as he was getting tired I just said, "*H'sh!*" and 'e'd start agin as fresh as ever. He tumbled to it at last, and went aboard shaking 'is little fist at me and telling me wot he'd do to me if it wasn't for the lor.

I kept by the gate as soon as I came on dooty next evening, just to give 'im a little smile as 'e went out. There is nothing more aggravating than a smile when it is properly done; but there was no signs o' my lord, and, arter practising it on a carman by mistake, I 'ad to go inside for a bit and wait till he 'ad gorn.

The coast was clear by the time I went back, and I 'ad just stepped outside with my back up agin the gate-post to 'ave a pipe, when I see a boy coming along with a bag. Good-looking lad of about fifteen 'e was, nicely dressed in a serge suit, and he no sooner gets up to me than 'e puts down the bag and looks up at me with a timid sort o' little smile.

"Good evening, cap'n," he ses.

He wasn't the fust that 'ad made that mistake; older people than 'im have done it.

"Good evening, my lad," I ses.

"I s'pose," he ses, in a trembling voice, "I suppose you ain't looking out for a cabin-boy, sir?"

"Cabin-boy?" I ses. "No, I ain't."

"I've run away from 'ome to go to sea," he ses, "and I'm afraid of being pursued. Can I come inside?"

Afore I could say "No" he 'ad come, bag and all, and afore I could say anything else he 'ad nipped into the office and stood there with his 'and on his chest, panting.

"I know I can trust you," he ses; "I can see it by your face."

"Wot 'ave you run away from 'ome for?" I ses. "Have they been ill-treating of you?"

"Ill-treating me?" he ses, with a laugh. "Not much. Why, I expect my father is running about all over the place offering rewards for me. He wouldn't lose me for a thousand pounds."

I pricked up my ears at that; I don't deny it. Anybody would. Besides, I knew it would be doing 'm a kindness to hand 'im back to 'is father. And then I did a bit o' thinking to see 'ow it was to be done.

"Sit down," I ses, putting three or four ledgers on the floor behind one of the desks. "Sit down, and let's talk it over."

We talked away for ever so long, but, do all I would, I couldn't persuade 'im. His 'ead was stuffed full of coral islands and smugglers and pirates and foreign ports. He said 'e wanted to see the world, and flying-fish.

"I love the blue billers," he ses; "the heaving blue billers is wot I want."

I tried to explain to 'im who would be doing the heaving, but 'e wouldn't listen to me. He sat on them ledgers like a little wooden image, looking up at me and shaking his 'ead, and when I told 'im of storms and shipwrecks he just smacked 'is lips and his blue eyes shone with joy. Arter a time I saw it was no good trying to persuade 'im, and I pretended to give way.

"I think I can get you a ship with a friend o' mine," I ses; "but, mind, I've got to relieve your pore father's mind—I must let 'im know wot's become of you."

"Not before I've sailed," he ses, very quick.

"Certingly not," I ses. "But you must give me 'is name and address, and, arter the *Blue Shark*—that's the name of your ship—is clear of the land, I'll send 'im a letter with no name to it, saying where you 'ave gorn."

He didn't seem to like it at fust, and said 'e would write 'imself, but arter I 'ad pointed out that 'e might forget and that I was responsible, 'e gave way and told me that 'is father was named Mr. Watson, and he kept a big draper's shop in the Commercial Road.

We talked a bit arter that, just to stop 'is suspicions, and then I told 'im to stay where 'e was on the floor, out of sight of the window, while I went to see my friend the captin.

I stood outside for a moment trying to make up my mind wot to do. O' course, I 'ad no business, strictly speaking, to leave the wharf, but, on the other 'and, there was a

father's 'eart to relieve. I edged along bit by bit while I was thinking, and then, arter looking back once or twice to make sure that the boy wasn't watching me, I set off for the Commercial Road as hard as I could go.

I'm not so young as I was. It was a warm evening, and I 'adn't got even a bus fare on me. I 'ad to walk all the way, and, by the time I got there, I was 'arf melted. It was a tidy-sized shop, with three or four nice-looking gals behind the counter, and things like babies' high chairs for the customers to sit on—long in the leg and ridikerlously small in the seat. I went up to one of the gals and told 'er I wanted to see Mr. Watson.

"On private business," I ses. "Very important."

She looked at me for a moment, and then she went away and fetched a tall, bald-headed man with grey side-whiskers and a large nose.

"Wot d'you want?" he ses, coming up to me.

"I want a word with you in private," I ses.

"This is private enough for me," he ses. "Say wot you 'ave to say, and be quick about it."

I drawed myself up a bit and looked at him. "P'r'aps you ain't missed 'im yet," I ses.

"Missed 'im?" he ses, with a growl. "Missed who?"

"Your—son. Your blue-eyed son," I ses, looking 'im straight in the eye.

"Look here!" he ses, spluttering. "You be off. 'Ow dare you come here with your games? Wot d'ye mean by it?"

"I mean," I ses, getting a bit out o' temper, "that your boy has run away to go to sea, and I've come to take you to 'im."

He seemed so upset that I thought 'e was going to 'ave a fit at fust, and it seemed only natural, too. Then I see that the best-looking girl and another *was* 'aving a fit, although trying 'ard not to.

"If you don't get out o' my shop," he ses at last, "I'll 'ave you locked up."

"Very good!" I ses, in a quiet way. "Very good; but, mark my words, if he's drownded you'll never forgive yourself as long as you live for letting your temper get the better of you—you'll never know a good night's rest agin. Besides, wot about 'is mother?"

One o' them silly gals went off agin just like a damp firework, and Mr. Watson, arter nearly choking 'imself with temper, shoved me out o' the way and marched out o' the shop. I didn't know wot to make of 'im at fust, and then one o' the gals told me that 'e was a bachelor and 'adn't got no son, and that somebody 'ad been taking advantage of what she called my innercence to pull my leg.

"You toddle off 'ome," she ses, "before Mr. Watson comes back."

"It's a shame to let 'im come out alone," ses one o' the other gals. "Where do you live, gran'pa?"

I see then that I 'ad been done, and I was just walking out o' the shop, pretending to be deaf, when Mr. Watson come back with a silly young policeman wot asked me wot I meant by it. He told me to get off 'ome quick, and actooally put his 'and on my shoulder, but it 'ud take more than a thing like that to push me, and, arter trying his 'ardest, he could only rock me a bit.

I went at last because I wanted to see that boy agin, and the young policeman follered me quite a long way, shaking his silly 'ead at me and telling me to be careful.

I got a ride part o' the way from Commercial Road to Aldgate by getting on the wrong bus, but it wasn't much good, and I was quite tired by the time I got back to the wharf. I waited outside for a minute or two to get my wind back agin, and then I went in—boiling.

You might ha' knocked me down with a feather, as the saying is, and I just stood inside the office speechless. The boy 'ad disappeared, and sitting on the floor where I 'ad left 'im was a very nice-looking gal of about eighteen, with short 'air and a white blouse.

"Good evening, sir," she ses, jumping up and giving me a pretty little frightened look. "I'm so sorry that my brother has been deceiving you. He's a bad, wicked, ungrateful boy. The idea of telling you that Mr. Watson was 'is father! Have you been there? I do 'ope you're not tired."

"Where is he?" I ses.

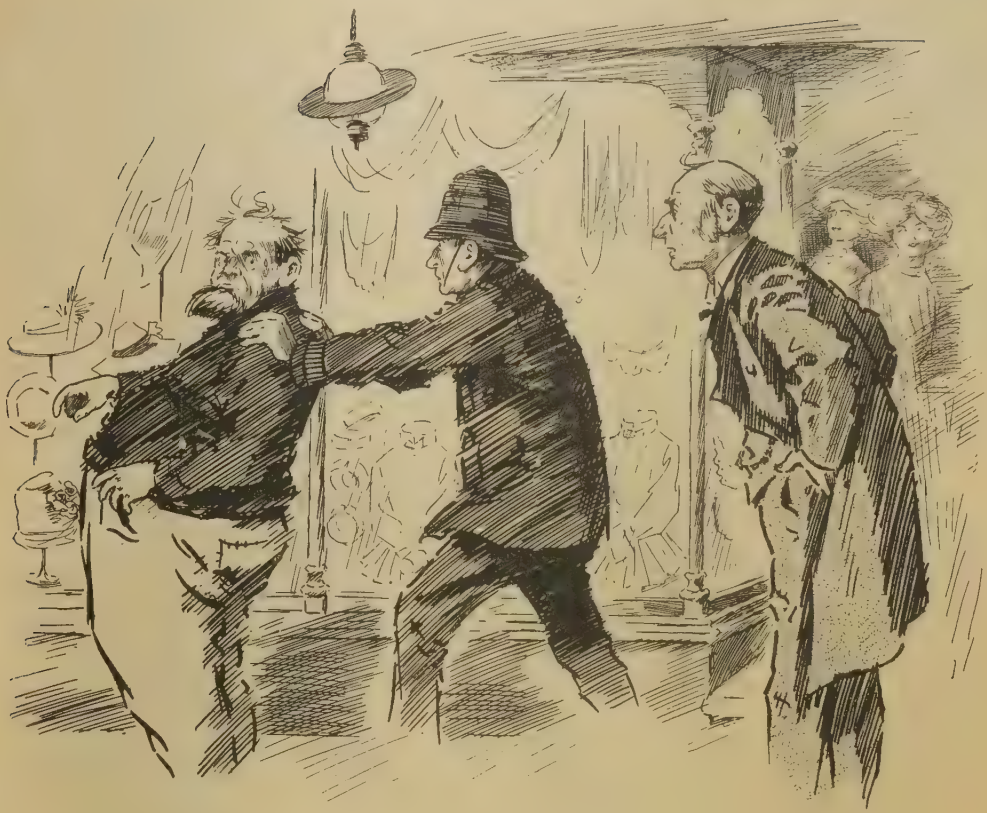
"He's gorn," she ses, shaking her 'ead. "I begged and prayed of 'im to stop, but 'e wouldn't. He said 'e thought you might be offended with 'im. 'Give my love to old Roley-Poley, and tell 'im I don't trust 'im,' he ses."

She stood there looking so scared that I didn't know wot to say. By and by she took out 'er little pocket-ankercher and began to cry.

"Oh, get 'im back," she ses. "Don't let it be said I follered 'im 'ere all the way for nothing. Have another try. For my sake!"

"'Ow can I get 'im back when I don't know where he's gorn?" I ses.

"He—he's gorn to 'is godfather," she ses,



"ARTER TRYING HIS 'ARDEST, HE COULD ONLY ROCK ME A BIT."

dabbing her eyes. "I promised 'im not to tell anybody; but I don't know wot to do for the best."

"Well, p'r'aps 'is godfather will 'old on to 'im," I ses.

"He won't tell 'im anything about going to sea," she ses, shaking her little 'ead. "He's just gorn to try and bo-bo-borrow some money to go away with."

She bust out sobbing, and it was all I could do to get the godfather's address out of 'er. When I think of the trouble I took to get it I come over quite faint. At last she told me, between 'er sobs, that 'is name was Mr. Kiddem, and that he lived at 27, Bridge Street.

"He's one o' the kindest-'earted and most generous men that ever lived," she ses; "that's why my brother Harry 'as gone to 'im. And you needn't mind taking anything 'e likes to give you; he's rolling in money."

I took it a bit easier going to Bridge Street, but the evening seemed 'otter than ever, and by the time I got to the 'ouse I was pretty near done up. A nice, tidy-looking woman opened the door, but she was a'most stone-deaf, and I 'ad to shout the name pretty near a dozen times afore she 'eard it.

"He don't live 'ere," she ses.

"'As he moved?" I ses. "Or wot?"

She shook her 'ead, and, arter telling me to wait, went in and fetched her 'usband.

"Never 'eard of him," he ses, "and we've been 'ere seventeen years. Are you sure it was twenty-seven?"

"Sartain," I ses.

"Well, he don't live 'ere," he ses. "Why not try thirty-seven and forty-seven?"

I tried 'em: thirty-seven was empty, and a pasty-faced chap at forty-seven nearly made 'imself ill over the name of "Kiddem." It 'adn't struck me before, but it's a hard matter to deceive me, and all in a flash it come over me that I 'ad been done agin, and that the gal was as bad as 'er brother.

I was so done up I could 'ardly crawl back, and my 'ead was all in a maze. Three or four times I stopped and tried to think, but couldn't, but at last I got back and dragged myself into the office.

As I 'arf expected, it was empty. There was no sign of either the gal or the boy; and I dropped into a chair and tried to think wot

it all meant. Then, 'appening to look out of the winder, I see somebody running up and down the jetty.

I couldn't see plain owing to the things in the way, but as soon as I got outside and saw who it was I nearly dropped. It was the boy, and he was running up and down wringing his 'ands and crying like a wild thing, and, instead o' running away as soon as 'e saw me, he rushed right up to me and threw 'is grubby little paws round my neck.

"Save her!" 'e ses. "Save 'er! *Help! Help!*"

"Look 'ere," I ses.

"She fell overboard," he ses, dancing about. "Oh, my pore sister! Quick! Quick! I can't swim!"

He ran to the side and pointed at the water, which was just about at 'arf-tide. Then 'e caught 'old of me agin.

"Make 'aste," he ses, giving me a shove behind. "Jump in. Wot are you waiting for?"

I stood there for a moment 'arf dazed, looking down at the water. Then I pulled down a life-belt from the wall 'ere and threw it in, and, arter another moment's thought, ran back to the *Lizzie and Annie*, wot was in the inside berth, and gave them a hail. I've always 'ad a good voice, and in a flash the skipper and Ted Sawyer came tumbling up out of the cabin and the 'ands out of the fo'c'sle.

"Gal overboard!" I ses, shouting.

"'GAL OVERBOARD!' I SES, SHOUTING."

The skipper just asked where, and then 'im and the mate and a couple of 'ands tumbled into their boat and pulled under the jetty for all they was worth. Me and the boy ran back and stood with the others, watching.

"Point out the exact spot," ses the skipper.

The boy pointed, and the skipper stood up in the boat and felt round with a boat-hook.

"SHE CAME ALONG TOWARDS ME WITH 'ER ARMS HELD CLOSE TO 'ER SIDES."

Twice 'e said he thought 'e touched something, but it turned out as 'e was mistaken. His face got longer and longer and 'e shook his 'ead, and said he was afraid it was no good.

"Don't stand cryin' 'ere," he ses to the boy, kindly. "Jem, run round for the Thames police, and get them and the drags. Take the boy with you. It'll occupy 'is mind."

He 'ad another go with the boat-hook arter they 'ad gone; then 'e gave it up, and sat in the boat waiting.

"This'll be a bad job for you, watchman," he ses, shaking his 'ead. "Where was you when it 'appened?"

"He's been missing all the evening," ses the cook, wot was standing beside me. "If he'd been doing 'is dooty, the pore gal wouldn't 'ave been drownded. Wot was she doing on the wharf?"

"Skylarkin', I s'pose," ses the mate. "It's a wonder there ain't more drownded. Wot can you expect when the watchman is sitting in a pub all the evening?"

The cook said I ought to be 'ung, and a young ordinary seaman wot was standing beside 'im said he would sooner I was boiled I believe they 'ad words about it, but I was feeling too upset to take much notice.

"Looking miserable won't bring 'er back to life agin," ses the skipper, looking up at me and shaking his 'ead. "You'd better go down to my cabin and get yourself a drop o' whisky; there's a bottle on the table. You'll want all your wits about you when the police come. And wotever you do don't say nothing to criminate yourself."

"We'll do the criminating for 'im all right," ses the cook.

"If I was the pore gal I'd haunt 'im," ses the ordinary seaman; "every night of 'is life I'd stand afore 'im dripping with water and moaning."

"P'r'aps she will," ses the cook; "let's 'ope so, at any rate."

I didn't answer 'em ; I was too dead-beat. Besides which, I've got a 'orror of ghosts, and the idea of being on the wharf alone of a night arter such a thing was a'most too much for me. I went on board the *Lizzie and Annie*, and down in the cabin I found a bottle o' whisky, as the skipper 'ad said. I sat down on the locker and 'ad a glass, and then I sat worrying and wondering wot was to be the end of it all.

The whisky warmed me up a bit, and I 'ad just taken up the bottle to 'elp myself agin when I 'eard a faint sort o' sound in the skipper's state-room. I put the bottle down and listened, but everything seemed deathly still. I took it up agin, and 'ad just poured out a drop o' whisky when I distinctly 'eard a hissing noise and then a little moan.

For a moment I sat turned to stone. Then I put the bottle down quiet, and 'ad just got up to go when the door of the state-room opened, and I saw the drownded gal, with 'er little face and hair all wet and dripping, standing before me.

Ted Sawyer 'as been telling everybody that I came up the companion-way like a fog-horn that 'ad lost its ma ; I wonder how he'd 'ave come up if he'd 'ad the evening I had 'ad ?

They were all on the jetty as I got there and tumbled into the skipper's arms, and all asking at once wot was the matter. When I got my breath back a bit and told 'em, they laughed. All except the cook, and 'e said it was only wot I might expect. Then, like a man in a dream, I see the gal come out of the companion and walk slowly to the side.

"Look!" I ses. "Look! *There she is!*"

"You're dreaming," ses the skipper; "there's nothing there."

They all said the same, even when the gal stepped on to the side and climbed on to the wharf. She came along towards me with 'er arms held close to 'er sides, and making the most 'orrible faces at me, and it took five of 'em all their time to 'old me. The wharf and everything seemed to me to spin round and round. Then she came straight up to me and patted me on the cheek.

"Pore old gentleman," she ses. "Wot a shame it is, Ted!"

They let go o' me then, and stamped up and down the jetty laughing fit to kill themselves. If they 'ad only known wot a exhibition they was making of themselves, and 'ow I pitied them, they wouldn't ha' done it. And by and by Ted wiped his eyes and put his arm round the gal's waist and ses :—

"This is my intended, Miss Florrie Price," he ses. "Ain't she a little wonder? Wot d'ye think of 'er?"

"I'll keep my own opinion," I ses. "I ain't got anything to say against gals, but if I only lay my 'ands on that young brother of 'ers——"

They went off agin then, worse than ever ; and at last the cook came and put 'is skinny arm round my neck and started spluttering in my ear. I shoved 'im off hard, because I see it all then ; and I should ha' seen it afore only I didn't 'ave time to think. I don't bear no malice, and all I can say is that I don't wish 'er any harder punishment than to be married to Ted Sawyer.

"CHEEK."

INSTANCES BY "STRAND" READERS.

Illustrated by W. E. Wigfull.

IN a recent issue of THE STRAND we gave a number of instances of impudent audacity, and suggested that our readers might be able and willing to supply further ones out of their own knowledge or experience. With this suggestion hundreds have complied, and we have pleasure this month in giving a selection from the anecdotes received. It is curious how the same story will turn up in different places, related of different times and persons. More than one has been sent to us by at least half-a-dozen correspondents, widely separated. This is the case with the following, of which we choose the version forwarded by Mr. F. H. Ursell, of Abbey Wood, Kent.

"A traveller in books," he writes, "who had been working Auckland, New Zealand, for all it was worth, called one morning on a grocer and introduced to his notice a medical work at the price of one sovereign. The grocer said he was too busy to attend to him, but if he cared to show the work to his wife he could do so. If she was satisfied with it he would purchase a copy.

"The American immediately proceeded to the grocer's private residence, where he informed the wife that the grocer had sent him with the book, for which she was to pay. The good lady, without demur, did so. The traveller then returned to the store, where the grocer was informed that his wife was very pleased with the work and would like her husband to purchase a copy. This the grocer did, whilst the traveller casually informed him that he wished to catch the boat for Wellington that morning.

"A short time after his departure a messenger came from the house who informed the grocer that his wife had purchased the book at his desire and was very pleased with it. The grocer's thoughts, on receiving this message, can easily be imagined.

"Just at this time a carrier called who did most of the collecting of goods from the various wharves. Acting on the spur of the moment, and not wishing to explain too fully the manner in which he had been done, the grocer asked him to go down to the wharf and request the Yankee to come back, as he wished to speak to him. The carrier drove down to the waterside with as little delay as possible, and, seeing the object of his journey on the deck of the steamer, gave the grocer's message to him. 'Oh, yes,' was the reply, 'I know what he wants. I was showing him a book this morning. I expect he wants to buy one. There isn't time for me to go back, or I shall lose this boat. You can pay me for the book, and he will pay you again when you take it to him.'

"The carrier, being ignorant of the trick already played on the grocer, readily produced the sovereign and returned with the book to his employer. What was said when the third copy of the medical book was laid on the grocer's counter history does not say, but it is certain that American travellers never received a kindly reception at that store again."

Here is another example of audacious and ingenious resourcefulness, sent in by Mr. Thomas Russell, 3, Fleet Road, Hampstead, N.W. :—

"A baker's barrow was standing unattended in a side street when a shabby man, by his appearance hard up and evidently out of work, looking round and seeing no one about, lifted the lid and quickly abstracted two loaves. He had one in each hand, just as the baker came out of a gateway close by.

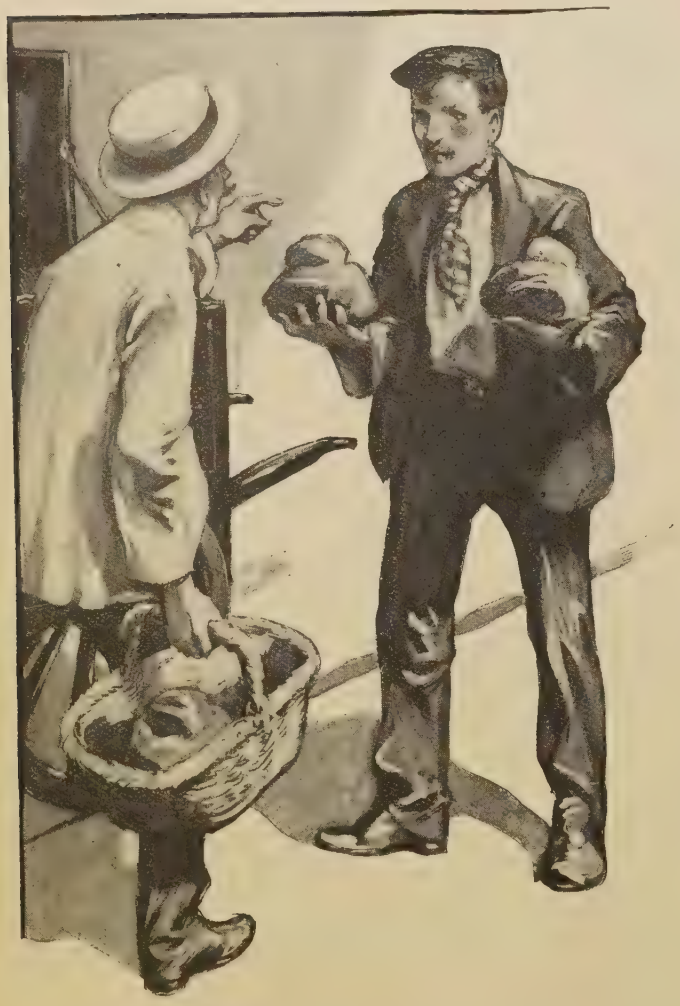
"The baker rushed up and, in a loud voice, demanded what he was doing there.

"The man calmly commenced weighing the loaves one against the other; then, turning to the baker, said :—

"'I was just wondering whether your loaf was heavier than mine, as my baker gives short weight!'

"'You put my loaf down and clear out of it.'

"The man immediately dropped one back into the barrow, and with the exclamation, 'All right, old chap, don't get nasty,' made a rapid retreat with the other loaf."



"I WAS JUST WONDERING WHETHER YOUR LOAF WAS HEAVIER THAN MINE, AS MY BAKER GIVES SHORT WEIGHT!"

But there is brazen audacity of all sorts and degrees of ingenuity. The next, though not new, is unique.

"A wealthy gentleman," writes Mr. John F. Walls, of New London, Connecticut, U.S.A., "died leaving his property to the three leading religious sects, stipulating, however, that the representatives of each should attend his funeral and deposit one thousand dollars each in his coffin. The deceased was known to be highly eccentric, and all three of the destined beneficiaries complied. The priest stepped forward and deposited his thousand dollars in paper money; the clergyman put in a like sum in gold, and was followed by a devout Hebrew, who laid in his required contribution and, after fumbling about the coffin, retired. A week later, when the property had realized a considerable sum, the trio met, and, after some conversation, the first two mentioned their buried sums in gold and bank-notes. 'What sort of money did you put in?' they asked the Jew. The latter smiled. 'Oh, gentlemen, I put in a cheque for three thousand dollars and *took out the change!*'"

To Mr. A. Garnett, 4, Redan Street, Ipswich, we are indebted for the following:—

"Mrs. R—— lives in a semi-detached villa with a neat little garden back and front. She has a particular fancy for primroses, although last year, on a certain date, she had fewer than she desired. There were enough for the front garden, but none in the back. One morning a man brought round to the back door a quantity of healthy-looking roots, and Mrs. R—— was glad to buy his whole stock.

"An hour later, on going to the front door, she discovered that the hawker had merely dug up the roots from the front garden, and, with colossal impudence, had carried them round the house to sell again to their owner for the back."

Here is a case of cold-blooded effrontery, related by Mr. T. Robinson, 59, Hazlewell Road, Putney:—

"One day a thief went into a small commercial hotel, where there was no porter, and took all the top-hats which he could lay his hands upon. Just as he was going out a commercial traveller entered and asked him what he was doing there. Without the slightest hesitation the thief promptly replied: 'I'm taking them round to be ironed, sir. Absolutely no charge," and continued, with the utmost coolness, 'And can I oblige you by taking yours as well, sir?'

"To this the traveller readily assented.

"'Well, as it's free and there's no charge, you might as well take mine, though it's nearly new and doesn't really want doing.'

"Thereupon the thief quickly walked out,

leaving the other to awaken to his loss, a sadder but a wiser man."

From hats we turn to beds, which are naturally far more rarely the object of the swindler's attentions. The story is sent by Mr. A. J. Romeril, Beaumont, Jersey:—

"The proprietor of a shop, hearing an unusual noise upstairs, went to investigate, and found a man on the landing with a huge bundle of bedding, and of course asked what business he had there.

"'I've come with the bed,' said the man.

"'What bed? I've ordered none.'

"'Aren't you Mr. ——?'

"'No, certainly not; so just clear out at once. And another time you ring at the side entrance.'

"The man apologized for his mistake, and then got the bundle on his back, the proprietor helping him, as it was so unwieldy, and seeing him out of the house.

"His disgust may be better imagined than described when he discovered some hours later that he had assisted in the removal of his own feather bed, pillows, and bedding!"

The following case of colossal impudence is said by Mr. Thomas McGrath, 2, Cross Avenue, Dublin, to be well authenticated. But the same story is related as having taken place in Hong-Kong and in an American town:—

"The Four Courts, Dublin, are a massive pile of buildings situated on the bank of the River Liffey. Within these walls takes place all the principal law business of the City of Dublin. One day during the hearing of a celebrated law-suit, within the great hall of justice, a slight interruption was caused by the appearance at the entrance to the hall of a man carrying on his shoulder a long ladder who 'came to take away the big clock to mend it.' The man's errand was notified to the judge, who sent round word that the man should 'take down the clock and be smart about it.' The man obeyed his lordship's order to the letter, but from that day to this nobody has seen either the man with the ladder or the fine clock which for so long had told the time of day to the law in Dublin."

Frequently a brazen impudence supplies the omission of a card of invitation to private parties. It is occasionally useful at public demonstrations. Miss E. Newton, 2, St. John's Terrace, King's Lynn, sends us the following:—

"Two gentlemen of the writer's acquaintance travelled some years ago from King's Lynn to Manchester, to hear the late Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone address a political meeting. Reaching their destination somewhat

"THE MAN GOT THE BUNDLE ON HIS BACK, THE PROPRIETOR HELPING HIM AND SEEING HIM OUT OF THE HOUSE."

late, they were dismayed to find the meeting so crowded that all hope of hearing the great orator seemed at an end. Mr. R——, however, was of a resourceful nature; moreover, he possessed a remarkably powerful voice. Raising the latter to its utmost capacity and gently urging his friend forward, he commanded the audience to 'make way for his lordship.' Immediately a pathway opened, and a repetition of this 'Open Sesame' admitted the impostors to the best position the hall afforded, where they sat and enjoyed Mr. Gladstone's speech in comfort."

"OH, IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER. I DON'T REQUIRE BLANKETS, BUT I WAS JUST WAITING FOR MY DAUGHTER, AND CAME IN TO REST FOR A MOMENT."

The cool cheek, not to say the intolerable presumption, of some shoppers has passed into a proverb.

"A stout old lady," writes Mr. James B. Thomson, 26, Grosvenor Place, Aberdeen, "entered a drapery establishment on a very warm day and, dropping heavily on a chair, asked to be shown a pair of blankets. The assistant quickly produced a light pair, and these the lady abruptly dismissed and called for better quality. The shopman returned with a heavy parcel, and the would-be customer was soon engaged making a cursory examination of the midnight covering.

"Another refusal made it necessary for the assistant to descend to the cellar, whence he returned with a huge package. The perspiration was dropping from his brow as he unfolded the goods for his client's

inspection. With a patronizing air, the lady inquired if this was all the stock, and the assistant was about to ascend to a shelf near the ceiling when the lady continued: 'Oh, it really doesn't matter. I don't require blankets meantime, but I was just waiting for my daughter, who is making some purchases next door, and I merely came in to rest for a moment. Thanks.'"

Rewards do not always flow directly to the deserving, as we are reminded by the following from Mr. Charles Lynch, 10, Daulby Street, Liverpool:—

"One Saturday night a cornet-player stood outside a public-house, rendering with much feeling 'Because I Love You.' A seedy-looking individual passing by stopped to listen. By and by, as the cornet-player began on the second verse, the seedy one walked into the public-house, and, doffing his cap, coolly began to solicit contributions 'For the musicians, gentlemen, please.'

"Coppers flowed into his cap, and when at length the performer outside entered to ask for patronage, he found that the generous largesse had just been given to his 'mate,' who, of course, had made a timely disappearance."

An amusing instance of "cheek" (though not from the victim's point of view) comes from Miss Hockheimer, Manchester:—

"A gentleman, on returning home from town, discovered that his valuable gold repeater had been stolen from his waistcoat-pocket. As the watch was an exceptionally fine one, he determined to try to recover it at all costs, and advertised offering a reward of five pounds, 'and no questions asked.' Next day a seedy-looking individual presented himself, handed over the watch, and duly received the promised reward. 'And now,' said the gentleman, who prided himself on his astuteness, and was anxious to know how he had been 'done,' 'just show me how you took it without my noticing, and you shall have another sovereign.'

"'Nowt easier, guv'nor,' replied the pick-pocket; 'you was just lookin' inter t' shop-winder; I slips me 'and inter yer weskit-pocket, like this' (suiting the action to the word), 'presses the swivel, and out nips the ticker as easy as winkin'.'

"'Well, my man, here's your sovereign, and don't do it again. You won't get off so easily next time.'

"The man departed with his six pounds, well content, and, not less pleased with the return of his watch, the gentleman called to his wife: 'Maria, come down here quickly!'

"'Whatever's the matter, John?'

"'Just fancy! I've had a man here in answer to my advertisement, and he's actually brought back my watch.'

"'Well, I never! However did he manage to take it without your noticing?'

"'Ah, my dear, I gave him an extra sovereign to show me that! It really was quite simple; I can't think how I didn't catch him at it. He just put his hand in my waistcoat-pocket, like this, and—— Good heavens, he's gone and taken it again!'"

But for barefaced impertinence, unaccompanied by roguery, it would be hard to beat the following:—

"A few years back, when the old horse-drawn trams were still in vogue, a well-dressed man hailed one in the Westminster Bridge Road. The conductor brought his charge to a standstill and impatiently awaited the approach of his prospective passenger, who, on coming up, took a match from his pocket and, striking it against the side of the car, lit a cigar.

"'That's all I wanted,' he remarked, as he strolled leisurely away. 'You can get along now.'"

The foregoing we owe to Mr. S. Benyon, Belsize, Baldslow Road, Hastings, who also sends the following:—

"A man strolled into a tobacconist's in Chiswick and asked for a shilling's worth of cigars. He was served.

"'On second thoughts,' said he, replacing them on the counter, 'I'd prefer cigarettes. You'll change these cigars for them?'

"'Certainly, sir.'

"The customer put the cigarettes in his pocket and turned towards the door.

"'Excuse me, sir,' cried the shopman, 'but you haven't paid for the cigarettes.'

"'Certainly not,' retorted the other, indignantly; 'didn't I give you the cigars in exchange? There are your cigars on the counter.' And the stranger walked away, leaving the tobacconist uncertain which of them was the rogue and which the victim."

OUR STAND AT THE WHITE CITY.

SO many of our readers will be attending the Coronation Exhibition at the White City, Shepherd's Bush, that we make no apology for drawing their attention to the stand devoted to THE STRAND MAGAZINE and other publications of Messrs. George Newnes, Ltd. It is easily found, for the Press Section is one of the most prominent features of the Exhibition, and the Newnes stand is in the centre of the hall. It is designed to represent an old-time book-shop, and admirably serves its purpose of showing to advantage a most varied and interesting collection.

From a Photo. by Geo. Newnes, Ltd.

The feature that will probably prove the greatest attraction to readers of this magazine is a collection of the original manuscripts of a number of famous STRAND writers. Here, for instance, may be seen the original of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's story, "The Adventure of the Dancing Men," which readers will not need reminding was one of the best of the Sherlock Holmes stories. Among the others are MSS. of stories by W. W. Jacobs, Morley Roberts, H. G. Wells, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Max Pemberton, and Charles Garvice, and of a poem by Rudyard Kipling. The whole of the manuscript of "The White Prophet," by Hall Caine, is also on view. It runs, as may be imagined, to a vast number of pages, covered with neat, almost microscopic, handwriting, with innumerable annotations on the fly-leaves, the whole being bound in green cloth, with the title and "Greeba Castle Library" in gold letters.

A glance round the stand reveals many other interesting items, such as a proof of an article on Queen Victoria's dolls, with corrections in Her late Majesty's own handwriting, and a Royal copy of THE STRAND bound in satin. Visitors can also obtain an insight into the production of the magazine, for here they have placed before them the various stages of the process, with explanatory notes which make everything clear.

Want of space precludes reference to many of the other contents of the stand, but these visitors may safely be trusted to discover for themselves.

Judith Lee: Pages from Her Life.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by W. R. S. Stott.

[A new detective method is such a rare thing that it is with unusual pleasure we introduce our readers to Judith Lee, the fortunate possessor of a gift which gives her a place apart in detective fiction. Mr Marsh's heroine is one whose fortunes, we predict with confidence, will be followed with the greatest interest from month to month.]

I.—The Man Who Cut Off My Hair.

MY name is Judith Lee. I am a teacher of the deaf and dumb. I teach them by what is called the oral system—that is, the lip-reading system. When people pronounce a word correctly they all make exactly the same movements with their lips, so that, without hearing a sound, you only have to watch them very closely to know what they are saying. Of course, this needs practice, and some people do it better and quicker than others. I suppose I must have a special sort of knack in that direction, because I do not remember a time when, by merely watching people speaking at a distance, no matter at what distance if I could see them clearly, I did not know what they were saying. In my case the gift, or knack, or whatever it is, is hereditary. My father was a teacher of the deaf and dumb—a very successful one. His father was, I believe, one of the originators of the oral system. My mother, when she was first married, had an impediment in her speech which practically made her dumb; though she was stone deaf, she became so expert at lip-reading that she could not only tell what others were saying, but she could speak herself—audibly, although she could not hear her own voice.

So, you see, I have lived in the atmosphere of lip-reading all my life. When people, as they often do, think my skill at it borders on the marvellous, I always explain to them that it is nothing of the kind, that mine is simply a case of "practice makes perfect." This knack of mine, in a way, is almost equivalent to another sense. It has led me into the most singular situations, and it has been the cause of many really extraordinary adventures. I will tell you of one which happened to me when I was quite a child, the details of which have never faded from my memory.

My father and mother were abroad, and I was staying, with some old and trusted servants, in a little cottage which we had in the country. I suppose I must have been between twelve and thirteen years of age. I was returning by train to the cottage from a short visit which I had been paying to some friends. In my compartment there were two persons besides myself—an elderly woman who sat in front of me, and a man who was at the other end of her seat. At a station not very far from my home the woman got out; a man got in and placed himself beside the one who was already there. I could see they were acquaintances—they began to talk to each other.

They had been talking together for some minutes in such low tones that you could not only not hear their words, you could scarcely tell that they were speaking. But that made no difference to me; though they spoke in the tiniest whisper I had only to look at their faces to know exactly what they were saying. As a matter of fact, happening to glance up from the magazine I was reading, I saw the man who had been there first say to the other something which gave me quite a start. What he said was this (I only saw the fag-end of the sentence):—

"... Myrtle Cottage; it's got a great, old myrtle in the front garden."

The other man said something, but as his face was turned from me I could not see what; the tone in which he spoke was so subdued that hearing was out of the question. The first man replied (whose face was to me):—

"His name is Colegate. He's an old bachelor, who uses the place as a summer cottage. I know him well—all the dealers know him. He's got some of the finest old silver in England. There's a Charles II. salt-cellar in the place which would fetch twenty pounds an ounce anywhere."

The other man sat up erect and shook his head, looking straight in front of him, so

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that I could see what he said, though he spoke only in a whisper.

"Old silver is no better than new; you can only melt it."

The other man seemed to grow quite warm.

"Only melt it! Don't be a fool; you don't know what you're talking about. I can get rid of old silver at good prices to collectors all over the world; they don't ask too many questions when they think they're getting a bargain. That stuff at Myrtle Cottage is worth to us well over a thousand; I shall be surprised if I don't get more for it."

The other man must have glanced at me while I was watching his companion speak. He was a fair-haired man, with a pair of light-blue eyes, and quite a nice complexion. He whispered to his friend:—

"That infernal kid is watching us as if she were all eyes."

The other said: "Let her watch. Much good may it do her; she can't hear a word—goggle-eyed brat!"

What he meant by "goggle-eyed" I didn't know, and it was true that I could not hear; but, as it happened, it was not necessary that I should. I think the other must have been suspicious, because he replied, if possible in a smaller whisper than ever:—

"I should like to twist her skinny neck and throw her out on to the line."

He looked as if he could do it too; such an unpleasant look came into his eyes that it quite frightened me. After all, I was alone with them; I was quite small; it would have been perfectly easy for him to have done what he said he would like to. So I glanced back at my magazine, and left the rest of their conversation unwatched.

But I had heard, or rather seen, enough to set me thinking. I knew Myrtle Cottage quite well, and the big myrtle tree; it was not very far from our own cottage. And I knew Mr. Colegate and his collection of old silver—particularly that Charles II. salt-cellar of which he was so proud. What interest had it for these two men? Had Mr. Colegate come to the cottage? He was not there when I left. Or had Mr. and Mrs. Baines, who kept house for him—had they come? I was so young and so simple that it never occurred to me that there could be anything sinister about these two whispering gentlemen.

They both of them got out at the station before ours. Ours was a little village station, with a platform on only one side of the line; the one at which they got out served for quite an important place—our local market town. I thought no more about them, but I did think of Mr. Colegate and of Myrtle Cottage. Dickson, our housekeeper, said that she did not believe that anyone was at the cottage, but she owned that she was not sure. So after tea I went for a stroll, without saying a word to anyone—Dickson had such a troublesome habit of wanting to know exactly where you were going. My stroll took me to Myrtle Cottage.

It stood all by itself in a most secluded situation on the other side of Woodbarrow Common. You could scarcely see the house from the road—it was quite a little house. When I got into the garden and saw that the front-room window was open I jumped to the very natural conclusion that someone must be there. I went quickly to the window—I was on the most intimate terms with everyone about the place; I should never have dreamt of announcing my presence in any formal manner—and looked in. What I saw did surprise me.

In the room was the man of the train—the man who had been in my compartment first. He had what seemed to me to be Mr. Colegate's entire collection of old silver spread out on the table in front of him, and that very moment he was holding up that gem of the collection—the Charles II. salt-cellar. I had moved very quietly, meaning to take Mr. Colegate—if it was he—by surprise; but I doubt if I had made a noise that that man would have heard me, he was so wrapped up in that apple of Mr. Colegate's eye.

I did not know what to make of it at all. I did not know what to think. What was that man doing there? What was I to do? Should I speak to him? I was just trying to make up my mind when someone from behind lifted me right off my feet and, putting a hand to my throat, squeezed it so tightly that it hurt me.

"If you make a sound I'll choke the life right out of you. Don't you make any mistake about it—I will!"

He said that out loudly enough, though it was not so very loud either—he spoke so close to my ear. I could scarcely breathe, but I could still see, and I could see that the man who held me so horribly by the throat was the second man of the train. The recognition seemed to be mutual.

"If it isn't that infernal brat! She seemed to be all eyes in the railway carriage, and, my word, she seems to have been all ears too."

The first man had come to the window.

"What's up?" he asked. "Who's that kid you've got hold of there?"

My captor twisted my face round for the other to look at.

"Can't you see for yourself? I felt, somehow, that she was listening."

"She couldn't have heard, even if she was; no one could have heard what we were saying. Hand her in here." I was passed through the window to the other, who kept as tight a grip on my throat as his friend had done.

"Who are you?" he asked. "I'll give you a chance to answer, but if you try to scream I'll twist your head right off you."

He loosed his grip just enough to enable me to answer if I wished. But I did not wish. I kept perfectly still. His companion said:—

"What's the use of wasting time? Slit her throat and get done with it."

He took from the table a dreadful-looking knife, with a blade eighteen inches long, which I knew very well. Mr. Colegate had it in his collection because of its beautifully-chased, massive silver handle. It had belonged to one of the old Scottish chieftains; Mr. Colegate would sometimes make me go all over goose-flesh by telling me of some of the awful things for which, in the old, lawless, bloodthirsty days in Scotland, it was supposed to have been used. I knew that he kept it in beautiful condition, with the edge as sharp as a razor. So you can fancy what my feelings were when that man drew the blade across my throat, so close to the skin that it all but grazed me.

"Before you cut her throat," observed his companion, "we'll tie her up. We'll make short work of her. This bit of rope will about do the dodge."

He had what looked to me like a length of clothes-line in his hand. With it, between them, they tied me to a great oak chair, so tight that it seemed to cut right into me, and, lest I should scream with the pain, the man

"HE CAUGHT HOLD OF MY HAIR, AND WITH THAT DREADFUL KNIFE SAWED THE WHOLE OF IT FROM MY HEAD."

with the blue eyes tied something across my mouth in a way which made it impossible for me to utter a sound. Then he threatened me with that knife again, and just as I made sure he was going to cut my throat he caught hold of my hair, which, of course, was hanging down my back, and with that dreadful knife sawed the whole of it from my head.

If I could have got within reach of him at that moment I believe that I should have stuck that knife into him. Rage made me half beside myself. He had destroyed what was almost the dearest thing in the world to me—not because of my own love of it, but on account of my mother's. My mother had often quoted to me, "The glory of a woman is her hair," and she would add that mine was very beautiful. There certainly was a great deal of it. She was so proud of my hair that she had made me proud of it too—for her sake. And to think that this man could have robbed me of it in so hideous a way! I do believe that at the moment I could have killed him.

I suppose he saw the fury which possessed me, because he laughed and struck me across the face with my own hair.

"I've half a mind to cram it down your throat," he said. "It didn't take me long to cut it off, but I'll cut your throat even quicker—if you so much as try to move, my little dear."

The other man said to him :—

"She can't move and she can't make a sound either. You leave her alone. Come over here and attend to business."

"I'll learn her," replied the other man, and he lifted my hair above my head and let it fall all over me.

They proceeded to wrap up each piece of Mr. Colegate's collection in tissue paper, and then to pack the whole into two queer-shaped bags—pretty heavy they must have been. It was only then that I realized what they were doing—they were stealing Mr. Colegate's collection; they were going to take it away. The fury which possessed me as I sat there, helpless, and watched them! The pain was bad enough, but my rage was worse. When the man who had cut off my hair moved to the window with one of the bags held in both his hands—it was as much as he could carry—he said to his companion with a glance towards me: "Hadn't I better cut her throat before I go?"

"You can come and do that presently," replied the other; "you'll find her waiting." Then he dropped his voice and I saw him say: "Now you quite understand?" The other nodded. "What is it?"

The face of the man who had cut my hair was turned towards me. He put his lips very close to the other, speaking in the tiniest whisper, which he never dreamed could reach my ears: "Cotterill, Cloak-room, Victoria Station, Brighton Railway."

The other whispered, "That's right. You'd better make a note of it; we don't want any bungling."

"No fear, I'm not likely to forget. Then he repeated his previous words, "Cotterill, Cloak-room, Victoria Station, Brighton Railway."

He whispered this so very earnestly that I felt sure there was something about the words which was most important; by the time he had said them a second time they were printed on my brain quite as indelibly as they were on his. He got out of the window and his bag was passed to him; then he spoke a parting word to me.

"Sorry I can't take a lock of your hair with me; perhaps I'll come back for one presently."

Then he went. If he had known the passion which was blazing in my heart! That allusion to my desecrated locks only made it burn still fiercer. His companion, left alone, paid no attention to me whatever. He continued to secure his bag, searched the room, as if for anything which might have been overlooked, then, bearing the bag with the other half of Mr. Colegate's collection with him, he went through the door, ignoring my presence as if I had never existed. What he did afterwards I cannot say; I saw no more of him; I was left alone—all through the night.

What a night it was. I was not afraid; I can honestly say that I have seldom been afraid of anything—I suppose it is a matter of temperament—but I was most uncomfortable, very unhappy, and each moment the pain caused me by my bonds seemed to be growing greater. I do believe that the one thing which enabled me to keep my senses all through the night was the constant repetition of those mystic words: Cotterill, Cloak-room, Victoria Station, Brighton Railway. In the midst of my trouble I was glad that what some people call my curious gift had enabled me to see what I was quite sure they had never meant should reach my understanding. What the words meant I had no notion; in themselves they seemed to be silly words. But that they had some hidden, weighty meaning I was so sure that I kept saying them over and over again lest they should slip through my memory.

I do not know if I ever closed my eyes; I certainly never slept. I saw the first gleams of light usher in the dawn of another morning, and I knew the sun had risen. I wondered what they were doing at home—between the repetitions of that cryptic phrase. Was Dickson looking for me? I rather wished I had let her know where I was going, then she might have had some idea of where to look. As it was she had none. I had some acquaintances three or four miles off, with whom I would sometimes go to tea and, without warning to anyone at home, stay the night. I am afraid that, even as a child, my habits were erratic. Dickson might think I was staying with them, and, if so, she would not even trouble to look for me. In that case I might have to stay where I was for days.

I do not know what time it was, but it seemed to me that it had been light for weeks, and that the day must be nearly gone, when I heard steps outside the open window. I was very nearly in a state of stupor, but I had still sense enough to wonder if it was that man who had cut my hair come back again to cut my throat. As I watched the open sash my heart began to beat more vigorously than it had for a very long time. What then was my relief when there presently appeared, on the other side of it, the face of Mr. Colegate, the owner of Myrtle Cottage. I tried to scream—with joy, but that cloth across my mouth prevented my uttering a sound.

I never shall forget the look which came on Mr. Colegate's face when he saw me. He rested his hands on the sill as if he wondered how the window came to be open, then when he looked in and saw me, what a jump he gave.

"Judith!" he exclaimed. "Judith Lee! Surely it is Judith Lee!"

He was a pretty old man, or he seemed so to me, but I doubt if a boy could have got through that window quicker than he did. He was by my side in less than no time; with a knife which he took from his pocket was severing my bonds. The agony which came

"I SAT UP IN BED, PUT UP MY HANDS—THEN IT ALL CAME BACK TO ME."

over me as they were loosed! It was worse than anything which had gone before. The moment my mouth was free I exclaimed—even then I was struck by the funny, hoarse voice in which I seemed to be speaking :—

"Cotterill, Cloak-room, Victoria Station, Brighton Railway."

So soon as I had got those mysterious words out of my poor, parched throat I fainted; the agony I was suffering, the strain which I had gone through, proved too much for me. I knew dimly that I was tumbling into Mr. Colegate's arms, and then I knew no more.

When I came back to life I was in bed. Dickson was at my bedside, and Dr. Scott, and Mr. Colegate, and Pierce, the village policeman, and a man who I afterwards knew was a detective, who had been sent over post-haste from a neighbouring town. I wondered where I was, and then I saw I was in a room in Myrtle Cottage. I sat up in bed, put up my hands—then it all came back to me.

"He cut off my hair with MacGregor's knife!" MacGregor was the name of the Highland chieftain to whom, according to Mr. Colegate, that dreadful knife had belonged.

When it did all come back to me and I realized what had happened, and felt how strange my head seemed without its accustomed covering, nothing would satisfy me but that they should bring me a looking-glass. When I saw what I looked like the rage which had possessed me when the outrage first took place surged through me with greater force than ever. Before they could stop me, or even guess what I was going to do, I was out of bed and facing them. That cryptic utterance came back to me as if of its own initiative; it burst from my lips.

"Cotterill, Cloak-room, Victoria Station, Brighton Railway! Where are my clothes? That's where the man is who cut off my hair."

They stared at me. I believe that for a moment they thought that what I had endured had turned my brain, and that I was mad. But I soon made it perfectly clear that I was nothing of the kind. I told them my story as fast as I could speak; I fancy I brought it home to their understanding. Then I told them of the words which I had seen spoken in such a solemn whisper, and how sure I was that they were pregnant with weighty meaning.

"Cotterill, Cloak-room, Victoria Station, Brighton Railway—that's where the man is who cut my hair off—that's where I'm going to catch him."

The detective was pleased to admit that there might be something in my theory, and that it would be worth while to go up to Victoria Station to see what the words might mean. Nothing would satisfy me but that we should go at once. I was quite convinced that every moment was of importance, and that if we were not quick we should be too late. I won Mr. Colegate over—of course, he was almost as anxious to get his collection back as I was to be quits with the miscreant who had shorn me of my locks. So we went up to town by the first train we could catch—Mr. Colegate, the detective, and an excited and practically hairless child.

When we got to Victoria Station we marched straight up to the cloak-room, and the detective said to one of the persons on the other side of the counter :—

"Is there a parcel here for the name of Cotterill?"

The person to whom he had spoken did not reply, but another man who was standing by his side.

"Cotterill? A parcel for the name of Cotterill has just been taken out—a hand-bag, scarcely more than half a minute ago. You must have seen him walking off with it as you came up. He can hardly be out of sight now." Leaning over the counter, he looked along the platform. "There he is—someone is just going to speak to him."

I saw the person to whom he referred—a shortish man in a light grey suit, carrying a brown leather hand-bag. I also saw the person who was going to speak to him; and thereupon I ceased to have eyes for the man with the bag. I broke into exclamation.

"There's the man who cut my hair!" I cried. I went rushing along the platform as hard as I could go. Whether the man had heard me or not I cannot say; I dare say I had spoken loudly enough; but he gave one glance in my direction, and when he saw me I have no doubt that he remembered. He whispered to the man with the bag. I was near enough to see, though not to hear, what he said. In spite of the rapidity with which his lips were moving, I saw quite distinctly.

"Bantock, 13, Harwood Street, Oxford Street." That was what he said, and no sooner had he said it than he turned and fled—from me; I knew he was flying from me, and it gave me huge satisfaction to know that the mere sight of me had made him run. I was conscious that Mr. Colegate and the detective were coming at a pretty smart pace behind me.

The man with the bag, seeing his companion dart off without the slightest warning, glanced round to see what had caused his hasty flight.

I suppose he saw me and the detective and Mr. Colegate, and he drew his own conclusions. He dropped that hand-bag as if it had been red-hot, and off he ran. He ran to such purpose that we never caught him—neither him nor the man who had cut my hair. The station was full of people—a train had just come in. The crowd streaming out covered the platform with a swarm of moving figures. They acted as cover to those two eager gentlemen—they got clean off. But we got the bag; and, one of the station officials coming on the scene, we were shown to an apartment where, after explanations had been made, the bag and its contents were examined.

"IN NEARLY EVERY GARMENT JEWELS WERE WRAPPED, WHICH FELL OUT OF THEM AS THEY WERE WITHDRAWN FROM THE BAG."

Of course, we had realized from the very first moment that Mr. Colegate's collection could not possibly be in that bag, because it was not nearly large enough. When it was seen what was in it, something like a sensation was created. It was crammed with small articles of feminine clothing. In nearly every garment jewels were wrapped, which fell out of them as they were withdrawn from the bag. Such jewels! You should have seen the display they made when they were spread out upon the leather-covered table—and our faces as we stared at them.

"This does not look like my collection of old silver," observed Mr. Colegate.

"No," remarked a big, broad-shouldered man, who I afterwards learned was a well-known London detective, who had been induced by our detective to join our party. "This does not look like your collection of old silver, sir; it looks, if you'll excuse my saying so, like something very much more worth finding. Unless I am mistaken, these are the Duchess of Datchet's jewels, some of which she wore at the last Drawing Room, and which were taken from her Grace's bedroom after her return. The police all over Europe have been looking for them for more than a month."

"That bag has been with us nearly a month. The party who took it out paid four-and-sixpence for cloak-room charges—twopence a day for twenty-seven days."

The person from the cloak-room had come with us to that apartment; it was he who said this. The London detective replied:—

"Paid four-and-sixpence, did he? Well, it was worth it—to us. Now, if I could lay my hand on the party who put that bag in the cloak-room, I might have a word of a kind to say to him."

I had been staring, wide-eyed, as piece by piece the contents of the bag had been disclosed; I had been listening, open-eared, to what the detective said; when he made that remark about laying his hands on the party who had deposited that bag in the cloak-room, there came into my mind the words which I had seen the man who had cut my hair whisper as he fled to the man with the bag. The cryptic sentence which I had seen him whisper as I sat tied to the chair had indeed proved to be full of meaning; the words which, even in the moment of flight, he had felt bound to utter might be just as full. I ventured on an observation, the first which I had made, speaking with a good deal of diffidence.

"I think I know where he might be found—I am not sure, but I think."

All eyes were turned to me. The detective exclaimed:—

"You think you know? As we haven't got so far as thinking, if you were to tell us, little lady, what you think, it might be as well, mightn't it?"

I considered—I wanted to get the words exactly right.

"Suppose you were to try"—I paused so as to make quite sure—"Bantock, 13, Harwood Street, Oxford Street."

"And who is Bantock?" the detective asked. "And what do you know about him, anyhow?"

"I don't know anything at all about him, but I saw the man who cut my hair whisper to the other man just before he ran away, 'Bantock, 13, Harwood Street, Oxford Street'—I saw him quite distinctly."

"You saw him whisper? What does the girl mean by saying she saw him whisper? Why, young lady, you must have been quite fifty feet away. How, at that distance, and with all the noise of the traffic, could you hear a whisper?"

"I didn't say I heard him; I said I saw him. I don't need to hear to know what a person is saying. I just saw you whisper to the other man, 'The young lady seems to be by way of being a curiosity.'"

The London detective stared at our detective. He seemed to be bewildered.

"But I—I don't know how you heard that; I scarcely breathed the words."

Mr. Colegate explained. When they heard they all seemed to be bewildered, and they looked at me, as people do look at the present day, as if I were some strange and amazing thing. The London detective said:—

"I never heard the like to that. It seems to me very much like what old-fashioned people called 'black magic.'"

Although he was a detective, he could not have been a very intelligent person after all, or he would not have talked such nonsense. Then he added, with an accent on the "saw":—

"What was it you said you *saw* him whisper?"

I bargained before I told him.

"I will tell you if you let me come with you."

"Let you come with me?" He stared still more. "What does the girl mean?"

"Her presence," struck in Mr. Colegate, "may be useful for purposes of recognition. She won't be in the way; you can do no harm by letting her come."

"If you don't promise to let me come I sha'n't tell you."

The big man laughed. He seemed to find me amusing; I do not know why. If he had only understood my feeling on the subject of my hair, and how I yearned to be even with the man who had wrought me what seemed to me such an irreparable injury. I daresay it sounds as if I were very revengeful. I do not think it was a question of vengeance only; I wanted justice. The detective took out a fat note-book.

"Very well; it's a bargain. Tell me what you saw him whisper, and you shall come." So I told him again, and he wrote it down. "'Bantock, 13, Harwood Street, Oxford Street.' I know Harwood Street, though I don't know Mr. Bantock. But he seems to be residing at what is generally understood to be an unlucky number. Let me get a message through to the Yard—we may want assistance. Then we'll pay a visit to Mr. Bantock—if there is such a person. It sounds like a very tall story to me."

I believe that even then he doubted if I had seen what I said I saw. When we did start I was feeling pretty nervous, because I realized that if we were going on a fool's errand, and there did turn out to be no Bantock, that London detective would doubt me more than ever. And, of course, I could not be sure that there was such a person, though it was some comfort to know that there was a Harwood Street. We went four in a cab—the two detectives, Mr. Colegate and I. We had gone some distance before

the cab stopped. The London detective said :—

" This is Harwood Street ; I told the driver to stop at the corner—we will walk the rest of the way. A cab might arouse suspicion ; you never know."

It was a street full of shops. No. 13 proved to be a sort of curiosity shop and jeweller's combined ; quite a respectable-looking place, and sure enough over the top of the window was the name " Bantock."

" That looks as if, at any rate, there were a Bantock," the big man said ; it was quite a weight off my own mind when I saw the name.

Just as we reached the shop a cab drew up and five men got out, whom the London detective seemed to recognize with mingled feelings.

" That's queered the show," he exclaimed. I did not know what he meant. " They rouse suspicion, if they do nothing else—so in we go."

And in we went—the detective first, and I close on his heels. There were two young men standing close together behind the counter. The instant we appeared I saw one whisper to the other :—

" Give them the office—ring the alarm-bell—they're 'tecs ! "

I did not quite know what he meant either, but I guessed enough to make me cry out :—

" Don't let him move—he's going to ring the alarm-bell and give them the office."

Those young men were so startled—they must have been quite sure that I could not have heard—that they both stood still and stared ; before they had got over their surprise a detective—they were detectives who had come in the second cab—had each by the shoulder.

There was a door at the end of the shop which the London detective opened.

" There's a staircase here ; we'd better go up and see who's above. You chaps keep yourselves handy, you may be wanted—when I call you come."

He mounted the stairs—as before, I was as close to him as I could very well get. On the top of the staircase was a landing, on to which two doors opened. We paused to listen ; I could distinctly hear voices coming through one of them.

" I think this is ours," the London detective said.

He opened the one through which the voices were coming. He marched in—I was still as close to him as I could get. In it were several men, I did not know how many, and I did not care ; I had eyes for only one. I walked right past the detective up to the table round which some of them were sitting, some standing, and stretching out an accusatory arm I pointed at one.

" That's the man who cut off my hair ! "

It was, and well he knew it. His conscience must have smitten him ; I should not have thought that a grown man could be so frightened at the sight of a child. He caught hold, with both hands, of the side of the table ; he glared at me as if I were some dreadful apparition—and no doubt to him I was. It was only with an effort that he seemed able to use his voice.

" Good night ! " he exclaimed, " it's that infernal kid ! "

On the table, right in front of me, I saw something with which I was only too familiar. I snatched it up.

" And this is the knife," I cried, " with which he did it ! "

It was ; the historical blade, which had once belonged to the sanguinary and, I sincerely trust, more or less apocryphal MacGregor. I held it out towards the gaping man.

" You know that this is the knife with which you cut off my hair," I said. " You know it is."

I dare say I looked a nice young termagant with my short hair, rage in my eyes, and that frightful weapon in my hand. Apparently I did not impress him quite as I had intended—at least, his demeanour did not suggest it.

" By the living Jingo ! " he shouted. " I wish I had cut her throat with it as well ! "

It was fortunate for him that he did not. Probably, in the long run, he would have suffered for it more than he did—though he suffered pretty badly as it was. It was his cutting my hair that did it. Had he not done that I have little doubt that I should have been too conscious of the pains caused me by my bonds—the marks caused by the cord were on my skin for weeks after—to pay such close attention to their proceedings as I did under the spur of anger. Quite possibly that tell-tale whisper would have gone unnoticed. Absorbed by my own suffering, I should have paid very little heed to the cryptic sentence which really proved to be their undoing. It was the outrage to my locks which caused me to strain every faculty of observation I had. He had much better have left them alone.

That was the greatest capture the police had made for years. In one haul they

captured practically every member of a gang of cosmopolitan thieves who were wanted by the police all over the world. The robbery of Mr. Colegate's collection of old silver shrank into insignificance before the rest of their misdeeds. And not only were the thieves taken themselves, but the proceeds of no end of robberies.

It seemed that they had met there for a sort of annual division of the common spoil. There was an immense quantity of valuable property before them on the table, and lots more about the house. Those jewels which were in the bag which had been deposited at the cloak-room at Victoria Station were to have been added to the common fund—to say nothing of Mr. Colegate's collection of old silver.

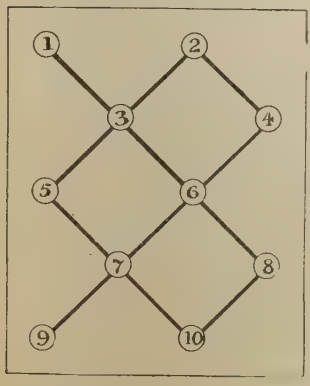
The man who called himself Bantock, and who owned the premises at 13, Harwood Street, proved to be a well-known dealer in precious stones and jewellery and *bric-à-brac* and all sorts of valuables. He was immensely rich; it was shown that a great deal of his money had been made by buying and selling valuable stolen property of every sort and kind. Before the police had done with him it was made abundantly clear that, under various *aliases*, in half the countries of the world, he had been a wholesale dealer in stolen goods. He was sentenced to a long term of penal servitude. I am not quite sure, but I believe that he died in jail.

All the men who were in that room were sent to prison for different terms, including the man who cut my hair—to say nothing of his companion. So far as the proceedings at the court were concerned, I never appeared at all. Compared to some of the crimes of which they had been guilty, the robbery of Mr. Colegate's silver was held to be a mere nothing. They were not charged with it at all, so my evidence was not required. But every time I looked at my scanty locks, which took years to grow to anything like a decent length—they had reached to my knees, but they never did that again—each time I stood before a looking-glass and saw what a curious spectacle I presented with my closely-clipped poll, something of that old rage came back to me which had been during that first moment in my heart, and I felt—what I felt when I was tied to that chair in Myrtle Cottage. I endeavoured to console myself, in the spirit of the Old World rather than the New, that, owing to the gift which was mine, I had been able to cry something like quits with the man who, in a moment of mere wanton savagery, had deprived me of what ought to be the glory of a woman.

"THAT'S THE MAN WHO CUT OFF MY HAIR!"

PERPLEXITIES.

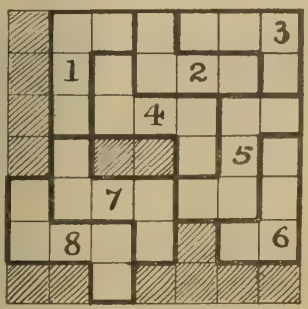
Puzzles and Solutions. By Henry E. Dudeney.



51.—A NEW COUNTER PUZZLE.

HERE is a new puzzle with moving counters, or coins, that at first glance looks as if it must be absurdly simple. But it will be found quite a little perplexity. Copy the simple diagram, enlarged, on a sheet of paper; then place two white counters on the points 1 and 2, and two red counters on 9 and 10. The puzzle is to make the red and white change places. You may move the counters one at a time in any order you like, along the lines from point to point, with the only restriction that a red and a white counter may never stand at once on the same straight line. Thus the first move can only be from 1 or 2 to 3, or from 9 or 10 to 7.

52.—A VENEER PUZZLE.



FROM a square sheet of paper or cardboard, divided into smaller squares, 7 by 7, as in the diagram, cut out the eight pieces in the manner indicated. The shaded parts are thrown away. A cabinet maker had to fit together these eight pieces of veneer to form a small square table-top, 6 by 6, and he stupidly cut that piece No. 8 into three parts. How would you form the square without cutting any one of the pieces?

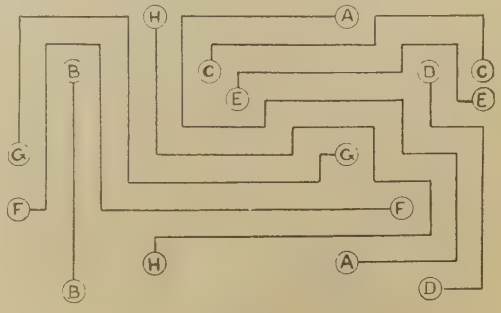
53.—THE HONEST DAIRYMAN.

AN honest dairyman in preparing his milk for public consumption employed a can marked B, containing milk, and a can marked A, containing water. From can A he poured enough to double the contents of can B. Then he poured from can B into can A enough to double its contents. Then he finally poured from can A into can B until their contents were exactly equal. After these operations he would send the can A to London, and the puzzle is to discover what are the relative proportions of milk and water that he provides for the Londoners' breakfast-tables. Do they get equal proportions of milk and water—or two parts of milk and one of water—or what? It is an interesting question, though, curiously enough, we are not told how much milk or water he puts into the two cans at the start of his operations.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

47.—A PUZZLE FOR MOTORISTS.

THE routes taken by the eight drivers are shown in the illustration, where the dotted line roads are omitted to make the paths clearer to the eye.

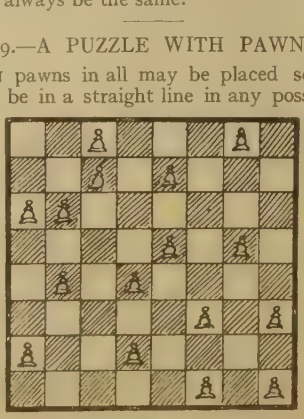


48.—THE FOUR DIGITS.

THE little jest in this puzzle lies in the fact that there is one quite simple solution that is general for not only any digit, but any number we may choose to select. Thus, four 7's may be made to express 100 in this way: $.7 \times .7 = 100$. Any number divided by the same number preceded by a decimal point equals 10. Thus, 7 divided by seven-tenths equals 70 divided by 7. Substitute any number you like for 7 and the result will always be the same.

49.—A PUZZLE WITH PAWNS.

SIXTEEN pawns in all may be placed so that no three shall be in a straight line in any possible direction, as in the diagram. The words "possible direction," of course, include directions other than those taken by a rook or a bishop. We regard the pawns as mere points on an unchequered plane.



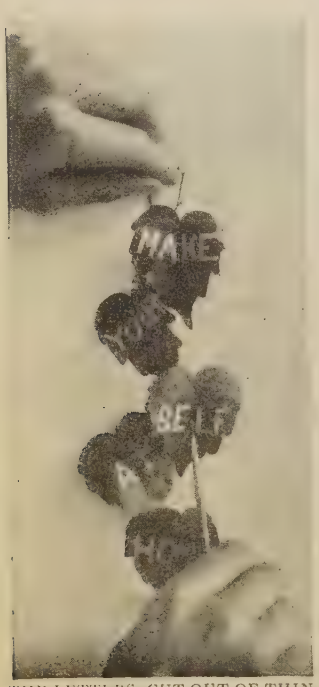
50.—A DEAL IN APPLES.

I WAS first offered sixteen apples for my shilling, which would be at the rate of ninepence a dozen. The two extra apples gave me eighteen for a shilling, which is at the rate of eightpence a dozen, or one penny a dozen less than the first price asked.

Nature-Printing on Leaf Sprays.

Written and Illustrated by S. LEONARD BASTIN.

THE idea was suggested to my mind quite by chance. On an autumn day when the gorgeous tints were at their brightest, attention was drawn to a curious fact in connection with a Virginian creeper which was rambling over an old summer-house. In the exposed situations the full sunlight had turned the foliage to a most brilliant crimson, but in places where the leaves overlapped one another, or were screened in some ways from the solar rays, the tinting was a clear yellow. The thought was irresistible that, by controlling this matter of light and shade, it should be possible to carry out a somewhat novel form of nature-printing, and so add to the curious possibilities of the garden. In this direction some remarkable effects may be secured, and it will not, perhaps, be uninteresting briefly to outline the method of procedure.



THE LETTERS, CUT OUT OF THIN PAPER, ARE FASTENED WITH GUM TO THE LEAF-SPRAYS.

Perhaps the best kind of creeper on which to attempt to make the nature prints is that widely known as the Ampelopsis Veitchii. The neat habit of growth in this plant ensures that each leaf shall be well displayed to the light. It is important that the plant on which it is decided to experiment should be fully exposed to the sunshine, as a good deal of the success of the trial depends upon this; of course, a south aspect is best of all, but any good open situation will do very well.

The treatment is started some time during the summer, when the foliage is fully developed and yet has not commenced to "go off" in any way; July is perhaps the best time. Good sprays of the creeper should be selected on which there are eight or a dozen leaves of fair size. In the actual printing, paper stencils are employed, and these should be cut out neatly with a pair of fine scissors or a sharp knife. It is quite easy to do this if the letters are first drawn out on the paper. For the purpose of printing, the denser the paper the better, as long as it is not very thick. In the accompanying examples white paper has been employed for photographic effect, but it is really better to have it black or brown in colour; this will keep out the light. The form of the letters should be rather narrow, so that there will be no difficulty in fitting in the words on the leaves. Of course, all along it is necessary to exercise a little care in scheming out the length of the sentences, so that they fit well on the sprays of leaves. Any kind of greeting or word of welcome is peculiarly well suited for printing on the leaves of the creeper.

THE LETTERS FASTENED TO THE LEAVES OF A CREEPER.

A FINISHED EFFECT.

The fixing of the letters on the leaves must be accomplished on a perfectly dry day. As an adhesive there is probably nothing better than pure gum; this should be used in rather a stiff condition, so that the stencils may stick well. Arrange the letters in as straight a style as possible, so that they look all right to the eye, and be quite sure that the edges of the stencils are well fastened down. When the words are placed, carefully wipe each leaf with a moist sponge, doing this gently so that the leaves are not dislodged, yet thoroughly enough to clean away any gum which may be left on the surface of the foliage.

It is now greatly to be hoped that the weather will be fine and bright. A few showers will probably not be sufficient to dislodge the paper letters when once they are well dried on, but heavy continuous rain is a different matter. The creepers on which the writer experimented were growing against a wall, and it was not difficult to devise a screening curtain during a wet spell by hanging pieces of sacking from nails driven into the brickwork. Of course, any letters which should happen to become dislodged may be replaced without injury, especially in the early stages before the tinting of the foliage has started at all. It may perhaps be well to mention that every leaf on each spray should be quite fully exposed to the light, and no overlappimg should be allowed. In order to ensure this, it may be necessary to alter the position of some of the foliage. This may be done by looping pieces of silk round the stalks of the leaves and gently pulling the whole thing over, fastening the thread to small nails driven into the support up which the creeper is climbing.

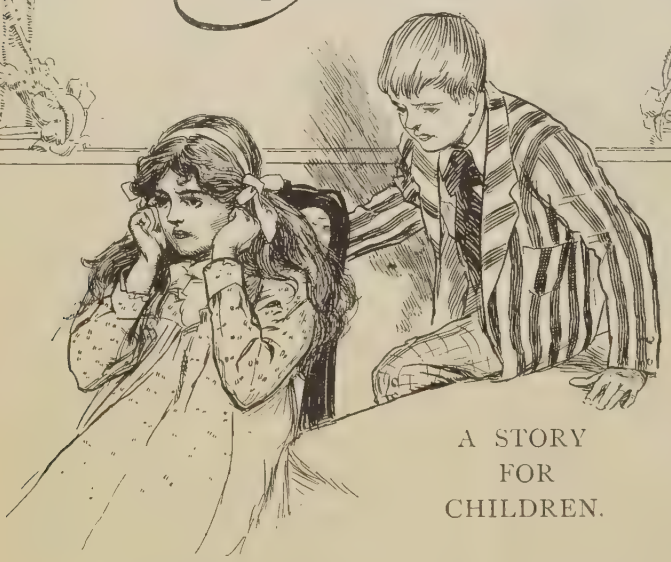
Fine sunny weather is, of course, most desirable if complete success is to be secured. Fortunately there is hardly a summer, however bad, in which we do not get a certain amount of bright heat during August. At this time it will be seen that day by day the foliage of the creeper turns a more brilliant colour. The sprays should not be allowed so long on the plant that there is a danger of the leaves falling. Luckily the Ampelopsis creeper turns a fine colour some time before there is any fear of this happening. As soon as the gathering is completed a bowl of lukewarm water should be secured, and into this the sprays should be placed for a few moments until the paper letters come away from the foliage, leaving behind them the impress of the stencils in yellow or pale green. It will be needless to point out that these nature-printed leaves may be introduced with curious effect into many schemes of decoration. It should be mentioned in conclusion that the sprays will keep very much longer if the skin of the lower part of the stem is cut away before it is placed in water.

A NOVEL GREETING FOR A GUEST.

The Wonderful Garden.

By
E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by
H. R. Millar.



A STORY
FOR
CHILDREN.

CHAPTER XII.

JUSTICE.

THE great discovery was Charlotte's. When they got home and found that the uncle had gone to Tonbridge for the day everyone felt that something must be done, and Rupert began to write out the telegram to his godfather. It was quite a nice telegram, very long, and explaining everything perfectly, but Mrs. Wilmington unexpectedly refused to lend more than ninepence, so it could not be sent. Caroline sat rocking herself to and fro, with her fingers in her ears to shut out Charles's comments and advice, and tried in vain to think of some way of using a spell to help the mineral woman.

"It's no use, you know," Charles said, "looking up the spells in the books until we know how we're going to use it." And Caroline had to agree that this was so.

"You see," Charlotte joined in, "we mustn't give the wicked cousin anything to eat to make him good, and most likely we couldn't get at him to make him eat it, even if we were allowed. What a pity we can't get at the lord with a foreign education, weak from a child."

She sprang up. "Let's go to the Castle, and if he's not there we'll get another take-your-lunch-with-you-cheese-and-cake-will-do day and go to London and see him there."

"You don't know where the Castle is," Rupert objected.

"Yes, I do," said Caroline. "So there! William said the day of the Rupert hunt. He said, 'I hoped the boy'd got into the Castle grounds. Milord's men 'ud have sent Poad about his business pretty sharp if he'd gone trespassing there.' So it can't be far off."

"I'll tell you what," said Charlotte. "You know uncle said, the day after we'd been Rosicurians, would we like the carriage to go and see Mr. Penfold, only we didn't because we knew he'd gone to Canterbury! Now if we could only persuade William that going to see Lord Andor is the same thing as going to see Mr. Penfold, and that to-day is the same as the other day, well, then . . .

People think so much more of you if you go in a carriage."

"And what will you do when you get there?" Rupert asked, doubtfully.

"Why, give him a bunch of magic flowers and tell him about the mineral woman."

"You'll look very silly," Rupert told her, "driving up to a lord's house with your twopenny-halfpenny flowers, when he's got acres of glass most likely."

"I don't care if he's got miles of glass and vineries and pineries and every modern inconvenience. He hasn't got flowers that grow as true and straight as the ones in the wonderful garden. Thomas told me nobody had in all the countryside. And they're magic flowers, ours are. Oh, Rupert, I wish you wouldn't be so grown up."

"I'm not," said Rupert; "it's you that's silly."

"You're always being different from what we'd made up our minds you were," said Charlotte, hotly. "There, now it's out. We were sorry for you at first. And then we liked you; you were so adventurous and splendid. And then you catch a cold and go all flat. Why do you do it?"

"*Non semper vivens arcus*," said Rupert, and Charles hung on his words. "You can't be always the same. It would be dull. Besides, I got such a beastly cold. And I'd had the adventure. You don't want to go on having one dinner after another all day. You want a change.—I'm being sensible, that's all. I dare say I shall be silly again some day," he added, consolingly. "A chap has to be silly or not *moresuis*—that means 'off his own bat,' Charles."

"Yes," said Charles, "I'll remember."

"Well, look here. I'll go and try it on with William if you like," said Charlotte; "but he likes Caroline best, because of what she did on the Rupert hunt day."

"You do rub it in, don't you?" said Rupert. "I wish sometimes you *hadn't* helped me that day."

There was a silence. Then Charlotte said, "You go, Caro. And, Charles, whatever happens, you must wash your hands. Go on, like a sensible, and do it now, so as not to waste time."

Charles went, when Charlotte assured him that if he didn't they would go without him. The moment the door closed behind the others she turned to Rupert.

"Now, look here," she said; "I know what's the matter with you. You've got the black dog on your back. I don't know what dog it is or why. But you have. You haven't been a bit nice to-day; you didn't play up when you were Rupert of the Rhine. And you think you're letting yourself down by playing with us. You didn't think that the first day when we saved you. Something's got into you. Oh, I do believe you're bewitched. Rupert, *do* you think you're bewitched? Because if you are we know how to unbewitch you."

"You're a very silly little girl," was all Rupert found to say.

"Not a bit of it," said Charlotte, brightly. "You only say that because you haven't got any sisters of your own, so, of course, you don't know. We've been as nice to you as ever we could be, and you're getting nastier and nastier. If you like to be nice, *be* nice. If you don't, I shall know it's not your fault, but because you're bewitched, and I shall pity, but not despise you. So now you know."

Rupert was twisting and untwisting the fringed tassel of a sofa-cushion and looking at the floor.

"So you hate me now, I suppose?" he said.

"No, I don't. But I hate the black dog. I thought you were splendid at first. And even now I think you're splendid inside, really. Only something's happened. It *is* like bewitchment, I do think. Couldn't you do anything to stop it? I'd help you—really I would. I say; I'm sorry if I've scratched too hard."

"You don't understand," said Rupert, with what was plainly an effort. "Sometimes I'm like this. I feel as if I was someone else. I can't explain. Now you can laugh if you like. I only thought I'd tell you. Don't tell the others. It's perfectly beastly. I suppose I *could* help it if I knew the way. Only I don't."

"Suppose you had a bath?" suggested Charlotte. "Aunt Emmeline says when children feel naughty you should always wash their faces; and if it's true of children it must be true of bigger people," she added, hastily, answering Rupert's frown, "because your face is made of the same sort of stuff, however old you are."

"That was part of it," said Rupert, "when I saw the river to-day. Can you swim? I can. And I promised my father I'd never go into the water to swim unless there was some man there, and—— My father's in India, you know," he said, unnecessarily. "It was he taught me to swim." He walked to the window and looked out. "I thought I was going back to India with him. And then

the doctors said some rotten rigmarole, and my father went without me, and I was all right again three months after, and I might as well have gone with him, only it was too late; and then things began to happen that I never thought could. And nothing will ever be right again.'

"Look here," said Charlotte, "don't come with us this afternoon. You go down to Mr. Penfold's. He's the clergyman. He said the other day he'd teach Charles to swim, so I know he can. If you go directly he'll take you down to the river, and you can drown dull care in the Medway."

"Do you think he'd mind?"

"Mind? He'd love it," said Charlotte. "Just go and say, 'The three C.'s said I could swim, and I can too.'"

"You're not a bad sort," said Rupert, thumping her on the back as he went out, but keeping his face carefully turned away. "I think I will."

Charlotte and Charles met in the doorway, and the meeting was rather violent, for both were in a hurry, Charlotte to find out what William had said and Charles to tell her. I am sorry to say that he had not been washing his hands, as indeed their colour plainly confessed, but helping William in the toilet of the horse, for Caroline had succeeded in persuading William that to-day was, for all practical purposes, the same as the other day, the more readily, perhaps, because Mrs. Wilmington had come out and said that she didn't think it was at all. And Caro had said she thought perhaps they'd better *all* wash and not just Charles. William said that he would drive them to Lord Andor's lodge gates, because he had to go down to the station to meet the master anyhow, and it was on the way, or next door to, but they'd have to walk back.

"And we've forgotten to decide what flowers to get, and Caro says bring up the books so that she can look at them while you're washing your hands. Because William says he must start in a quarter of an hour."

Thus Charles ended breathlessly, adding, "Where's Rupert?"

"He's not coming with us. Get down 'Pope IV.' and I'll get 'The Language of.'" And carrying the books, she went up the wide shallow stairs, three at once.

There was but little time to make a careful selection of the flowers most likely to influence a youthful peer.

"To gather the flowers will be but the work of a moment," said Caroline. "You two go in the carriage and I'll tell William to drive out by the deserted lodge and pick me up at the garden gate."

Unfortunately the flowers were not easy to find. The gardener had to be consulted, and thus the gathering of Lord Andor's presentation bouquet was the work of about a quarter of an hour, so that William was waiting and very cross indeed when Caroline came running out of the garden with the flowers, a mere bundle, and no bouquet, as Charles told her, in her held-up skirt.

"No time now to drop people at lodge gates," he said. "I'll set you down at the turning, and even that I didn't ought to do by rights, being late as it is, and I shall have to fan the horse along something cruel to get to the station in time as it is."

So the splendour of driving up to the Castle in the carriage was denied them; they could not even drive to the lodge. And all they got, after all Caroline's careful diplomatic treatment of William, was, as she said, "just a bit of a lift."

"It saves time, though," said she, "and time's everything when you've got to be home by half-past six. I do hope Lord Andor's in, don't you?"

"I don't know," said Charles. "I think it would be more noble if we had to sacrifice ourselves and go to London to see him. We should have to break open our money-boxes. I've always wanted to do that. I do wish Rupert had been here. He could have made up something to say in Latin, and then Lord Andor would have had to pay attention."

"He'll have to in English," said Caroline, quietly, "if he's there. Oh, I do hope he is. The mineral woman is most likely crying all this time. She only stopped for a minute, I'm certain, to sort the bottles because of the men coming for them with the cart at three. Won't it be glorious going and telling her that it's all right and she needn't go?"

"But suppose it all *isn't* and she *need?*" said Charles, gloomily.

"The spells have never failed us yet," said Caroline.

"I believe it's something to do with the garden and our being the ancestors of Dame Eleanour," said Charlotte. "Of course it'll be all right, Charles."

"Rupert didn't think so."

"Rupert doesn't know as much as we do, when it isn't Latin," said Charlotte. "We're going to teach Rupert a lot by and by. You see if we don't. All right, William, we're getting out as fast as we can, aren't we?" for the carriage had stopped and a voice from the box was urging them to look slippy.

The carriage rolled away, leaving them at the corner with the big bouquet which Caroline had hastily arranged as they drove along.

"If we see him, you'll let me tell him, won't you?" she said; "because the mineral woman told about it to me." And the others agreed, though Charles pointed out that the mineral woman only told her because she happened to be there.

So far all had gone well with the project of calling on Lord Andor, to tell him about his unfortunate tenant and the week-ending admirers of her cottage. But at Lord Andor's lodge gate a check occurred.

As the long gate clicked itself into place after they had passed through it an elderly person in a black cap with violet ribbons put her head out of the lodge window and said:—

"No, you don't!"

"Yes, we do," said Charlotte, unguardedly.

"No village children allowed in," said the black and violet cap.

"We aren't," said Charles. And then the cap disappeared, only to reappear a moment later at the lodge door on the head of a very angry old lady with a very sharp, long nose, who might have been Mrs. Wilmington's grandmother.

"Out you go, the way you came," she said; "that's the order. What do you want, anyhow?"

"We've got a bouquet for Lord Andor," said Caroline, showing it.

"Keep it till the fifteenth," said the woman—a silly thing to say, for no bouquet will keep a fortnight. "No village people admitted till the gala and *fête* when his lordship comes of age. You can come then. Out you go. I've no patience," she added. And it was quite plain that she had not.

They had to go back. I wish I could conceal from you that Charles put out his tongue at her as he passed. It is a dreadful thing to have to relate, and my only comfort is that Caroline and Charlotte did not do it. Charlotte made a face, but Caroline behaved beautifully.

When they were out in the road again, Caroline said, almost "between her set teeth," as heroes do in moments of crisis, "You know that broken paling we passed?" The others instantly understood. They went back, found the broken paling, and slipped through. It was Caroline's dress that was really badly torn. Charlotte's was only

"'OUT YOU GO, THE WAY YOU CAME,' SHE SAID; 'THAT'S THE ORDER.'"

gathers which you can tuck into your waistband, and it only makes a lump and the skirt rather uneven lengths, and it was not the fence but a nail that tore Charles's stocking so badly.

The shrubbery in which they found themselves was very thorny and undergrowthy, and nearer to the lodge than they would have chosen. They could see its white walls quite plainly every now and then, and they feared that it, or the managing director of it, might be able to see them. But it makes all

the difference whether you are looking for a thing or not, doesn't it? And certainly the last thing the cap woman expected was that anyone should dare to defy her.

So, undiscovered and unsuspected, the children crept through the undergrowth. The thorns and briars scratched at the blue muslins, no longer, anyhow, in their first freshness, and Charlotte's white hat was snatched from her head by a stout chestnut stump. The bouquet, never the handsomest of its kind, was not improved by its travels. But misfortunes such as these occur to all tropical explorers, and they pressed on. They were all very warm and rather dirty when they emerged from the undergrowth into the smooth, spacious park and, beyond a belt of quiet trees, saw the pale, grey towers of the Castle rise against the sky. They looked back. The lodge was not to be seen.

"So *that's* all right," said Caroline. "Now we must walk fast, and yet not look as if we were hurrying. I think it does that best if you take very long steps. I wish we knew where the front-door was. It would be awful if we went to the back one by mistake and got turned back by Lord Andor's myrmidons."

"I expect his back-door is grander than our front," said Charlotte, "so we sha'n't really know till the myr-what's-its-names have gone for us."

"If we'd had time to disguise ourselves like grown-ups—Char, for goodness' sake tear that strip off your hat; it looks like a petticoat's tape that's coming down," said Caroline—"they'd have thought we'd come to call, with cards, and then they'd have had to show us in, unless he wasn't at home."

"He must be at home," said Charlotte, tearing a long streamer from the wretched hat, which now looked less like a hat than a fading flower that has been sat on; "it would be too much if he wasn't."

They passed through the trees and on to a very yellow gravelled drive, hot and gritty to the foot and distressing to the eye. Following this, they came suddenly round a corner on the Castle. It was much bigger than they expected, and there seemed to be no doubt which was the front entrance. Two tall, grey towers held a big arched gateway between them, and the drive led straight in to this. There seemed to be no door-bell and no knocker, nor, as far as they could see, any door.

"I feel like Jack the Giant-Killer," said Charles, "only there isn't a trumpet to blow."

His voice, though he spoke almost in a whisper, sounded loud and hollow under the echoing arch of the gateway.

Beyond its cool depths was sunshine, with grass and pink geraniums overflowing from stone vases. A fountain in the middle leapt and sank and plashed in a stone basin.

There was a door at the other side of the courtyard—an arched door with steps leading up to it. On the steps stood a footman.

"He's exactly like the one in 'Alice,'" said Caroline; "courage and dispatch."

The footman looked curiously at the three children — hot, dusty, and untidy — who advanced through the trim parterre. His glance dwelt more especially on the battered bouquet, on Charlotte's unspeakable hat, and the riven stocking of Charles.

"If you please," said Caroline, her heart beating heavily, "we want to see Lord Andor."

"'Slordship's not at heum," said the footman, looking down upon them.

"When will he be back?" Charlotte asked; while Caroline suddenly wished that they had at least brought their gloves.

"Can't say'm sheur," said the footman, doing something to his teeth with a pin; and his tone was wondrous like Mrs. Wilmington's.

"We want very much to see him," said Charles. "You see, we've brought him a bouquet."

"I see you 'ave—have," said the footman, more like Mrs. Wilmington than ever. "Would you like to leave it? It'll be a surprise for his lordship when he comes in." And the footman tittered.

"He *is* here, then," said Caroline. "I mean, he's not in London?"

"His lordship is *not* in London," said the footman. "Any other questions? Always happy to say me catechism, 'm sure."

The children turned to go. They felt the need of a private consultation.

"Any particular neem?" said the footman, and tittered again. "'Slordship'll be dying to know who it was called." And once more he tittered.

Charlotte turned suddenly and swiftly.

"You need not trouble about our names," she said; "and I don't believe Lord Andor knows how you behave when he's not there. He doesn't know *yet*, that is."

"No offence, miss," said the footman, very quickly.

"We accept your apology," said Charlotte, "and we shall wait till Lord Andor comes in."

"But, I say, look here, you know." The footman came down one step in his earnestness. "You can't wait here, you know."

"Oh, yes, we can," said Caroline, sitting down on the second step. The others also sat down. It was Charles who said, "So there!" and Caroline had to nudge him and say "Hush!"

"We never called before at a house where they didn't ask you in and give you a chair to sit on. But if this is that kind of house," said Charlotte, grandly, "it does not matter. It is a fine day, luckily."

"Look here," said the footman behind them, now thoroughly uneasy, "this won't do, you know. There's company expected. I can't have a lot of ragged children sitting on the steps like the first of May."

"I'm sorry," said Charlotte, without turning her head, "but if you haven't any rooms fit to ask us into, I'm afraid you'll *have* to have us sitting here."

The three sat staring at the bright garden and the dancing fountain.

"Look here," said the footman, weakly blustering, "this is cheek. That's what this is. But you go now. Do you hear? Or must I make you?"

"We hear," said Caroline, speaking as calmly as one can speak when one is almost choking with mingled rage, disappointment, fear, and uncertainty.

"And I defy you to lay a finger on your master's visitors," said Charlotte. "How do you know who we are? We haven't given you our names."

"'LOOK HERE,' SAID THE FOOTMAN BEHIND THEM, 'THIS WON'T DO, YOU KNOW.'"

The footman must have felt a sudden doubt. He hesitated a moment, and then, muttering something about seeing Mr. Checkles, he retired, leaving the children in possession of the field. And there they sat, in a row, on Lord Andor's steps, with the bouquet laid carefully on the step above them.

It was very silent there in the grey-walled courtyard.

"I say," whispered Charles. "Let's go. We've got the better of *him*, anyhow. Let's do a bunk before he comes back with someone we can't get the better of—thousands of stately butlers, perhaps."

"Never," said Charlotte, whose hands were cold and trembling with excitement. But Caroline said:—

"I wish Mr. Checkles might turn out to be a gentleman, the everyday kind that we know. Lords' servants seem more common than other people's, and I expect the lord's something like them. They say like master like man."

As if in answer to Caroline's wish, a door in the wall opened, showing a glimpse of more garden beyond, and a jolly-faced youth came towards them. He was a very big young man, and his clothes, which were of dust-coloured Harris tweed, were very loose. He looked like a sixth-form boy, and Charles at once felt that here was a man and a brother. So he got up and went towards the new-comer with the simple greeting:—

"Halloa!"

"Halloa!" said the sixth-form boy, with a friendly and cheerful grin.

"I say," said Charles, confidentially, as he and the big boy met on the grass, "there isn't really any reason why we shouldn't wait here if we want to?"

"None in the world," said the big boy, "if you're sure that what you're waiting for is likely to come and that this is the best place to wait for it in."

"We're waiting for Lord Andor," said Caroline, who had picked up the bouquet and advanced with it. "I'm so glad you've come, because we don't understand English men - servants. In India they behave differently when you call."

"What have the servants here done?" the youth asked, frowning, with his hands in his pockets.

"Oh, nothing," said Charles, in a hurry; "at least, I mean we accepted his apologies, so we can't sneak."

"I wouldn't call it sneaking to tell *you*," said Caroline, confidingly, "because, of course, you'd promise on your honour not to tell Lord Andor. We don't want to get other people's servants into trouble when we've accepted their apologies. But the footman *was* rather . . ."

At this moment the footman himself appeared at the top of the steps with an elderly whiskered man in black, whom the children rightly judged to be the butler. The two had come hastily out of the door, but when they saw the children and their companion the footman stopped as if—as Charles said later—he had been turned to stone, and only the butler advanced when the youth in the Harris tweed said, rather shortly, "Come here, Checkles!" Checkles came quickly enough, and when he was quite close he astonished the three C.'s much more than he will astonish *you* by saying, "Yes, m'lord!"

"Tea on the terrace at once," said the Harris-tweeded one, "and tell them not to be all day about it."

Checkles went, and the footman too. Charlotte always believed that the last glance he cast at her was not one of defiance, but of petition.

"So you're him," Charles was saying. "How jolly!"

But to Caroline it seemed that there was no time to waste in personalities, however flattering. Lord Andor's tea was imminent. He was most likely in a hurry for his tea; it was past most people's tea-time already. So she suddenly held out the flowers and said, "Here's a bouquet. We made it for you. Will you please take it?"

"That's awfully good of you, you know," said Lord Andor; "thanks no end!" He took the bouquet and smelt it, plunging his nose into the midst of the columbine, roses, cornflowers, lemon verbena, wistaria, gladiola, and straw.

"It's not a very nice one, I'm afraid," said Caroline, "but you can't choose the nicest flowers when you have to look them out in two books at once. It means, 'Welcome, fair stranger. An unexpected meeting. We are anxious and trembling. Confidence—no, we left that out because we hadn't any. And Agreement, because we hope you will."

"How awfully interesting! It *was* kind of you," said Lord Andor, and before he could say any more Charlotte hastened to say:—

"You see, it's not just an ordinary nosegay, please, and don't thank us, please, because it wasn't to please you, but to serve our own ends, though, of course, if we'd known how nice you are, and if we'd thought you'd care about one, we would have in a minute."

"I see," said Lord Andor, quite as if he really had seen.

"I'm sure you don't," said Caroline; "don't be polite, please. Say if you don't understand. What we want is justice. It's one of your tenants that had the cottage in your father's time before you, and they're turning her out because there are some week-endy people think the cottage is so pretty, with the flowers she planted and the arbour her father made and the roses that came from her mother's brother in Cambridgeshire. And she said you didn't know. And we decided you ought to know. So we made you the nosegay and we came. And we ought to go, and here's her name and address on a bit of paper, and I'm sorry it's only pencil. And you *will* see justice done, won't you?"

"It's very kind of you," said Lord Andor, slowly, "to take such interest in my tenants."

"There!" said Charlotte. "Of course, we were afraid you'd say that. But we didn't mean to shove our oar in. We just went in for ginger-beer, and Caro found her crying; and there's a hornbeam arbour, ever so old, and a few shillings a week can't make any difference to you, with a lovely castle like this to live in. And the motto on the tombs of your ancestors is 'Fiat Justitia.' And it's only bare justice we want; and we saw the tomb on Sunday in church, with the sons and daughters in ruffs."

"Stop!" said Lord Andor. "I am only a poor, weak chap. I need my tea. Come and have some too, and I'll try to make out what it's all about."

"Thanks awfully," said the three C.'s, speaking all together. And Caroline added, "We mustn't be long over tea, please, because we've got to get home by half-past six, and it must be nearly that now."

"You shall get back at half-past six all right," said Lord Andor, and led the way—a huge figure in the dust-coloured clothes—through the little door by which they had come, on to a pleasant stone terrace with roses growing all over and in and out and round about its fat old balustrades.

"Here's tea," he said. And there it was, set on a fair-sized table with a white cloth—a tea worth waiting for. Honey and jam and all sorts of cakes, and peaches and strawberries. The footman was hovering about, but Charles was the only one who seemed to see him. It was bliss to Charles to see this proud enemy humbly bearing an urn and lighting a spirit-lamp to make the tea of those whom he had tried to drive from even the lowly hospitality of Lord Andor's doorstep.

"Come on," said the big, sixth-form-looking boy who was Lord Andor; "you must be starved. Cake first (and bread and butter afterwards, if you insist upon it) is the rule here. Milk and sugar?"

They all drank tea much too strong for them, out of respect to their host, who had forgotten that when he was a little boy milk was what one had at tea-time.

And slowly, by careful questioning, and by making a sudden rule that no one was to say more than thirty-seven words without stopping, Lord Andor got at the whole story in a form which he could understand.

"I *see*," he would say, and "*I* see," and then ask another question.

And at last, when tea was really over, to the last gladly-accepted peach and the last sadly-unaccepted strawberry, he stood up and said:—

"If you don't mind my saying so, I think you are regular little bricks to have taken all this trouble. And I am really and truly very much obliged. Because I do mean to be just and right to my tenants, only it's very difficult to know about things if nobody tells you. And you've helped me a lot, and I thank you very much."

"Then you will?" said Charlotte, breathlessly.

"Not let her be turned out of her cottage, she means?" Caroline explained.

"She means the mineral woman," said Charles.

"Of course I won't," said Lord Andor; "I mean, of course, I will. I mean it's all right. And I'll drive you home, and if you're a minute or two late, I'll make it all right with uncle."

The motor was waiting outside the great arch that is held between the two great towers of Andor Castle. It was a dream of a car, and there was room for the three C.'s in the front beside the driver, who was Lord Andor himself.

The footman was there, and the proudest moment of the day, for Charles, was that in which Lord Andor gave the petition-bouquet into that footman's care, and told him to see that it was put in water, "Carefully, mind; and tell them to put it on the dinner-table to-night."

The footman said, "Yes, m'lord," as though he had never seen the bouquet before. Charlotte's proudest moment was when the woman at the lodge gate had to curtsy when the motor passed out.

Rupert was waiting for them at their own lodge gate, and when he saw the motor his eyes grew quite round like pennies. Yet, even after that, Rupert only said:—

"It's chance, I tell you. It's just accidental. Co—what's its name—incidence. It would all have happened just the same if you hadn't taken that hideous old mixed assorted haystack with you."

"Still disagreeable?" said Charlotte, brightly.

"Oh, been all the same, *would* it?" said Charles. "That's all you know."

"It's *not* all I know," said Rupert. "As it happens, I know heaps of things that you don't, and I could find out more if I wanted to. So there!"

"Oh, Rupert, don't be cross," said Caroline, "just when we're all so happy. I *do* wish you'd been there, especially at tea-time."

"I'm not cross," said Rupert. "As it happens, I was feeling extra jolly until you came home."

"Oh, *don't!*" said Caroline. "Do let's call it Pax. We haven't told you half the little interesting things that happened yet. And if you can't believe in the magic, it's your misfortune. We know you can't help it. We know you don't unbelieve on purpose. We know we're right, and you think you know you are."

"It's the other way round," said Rupert, still deep in gloom.

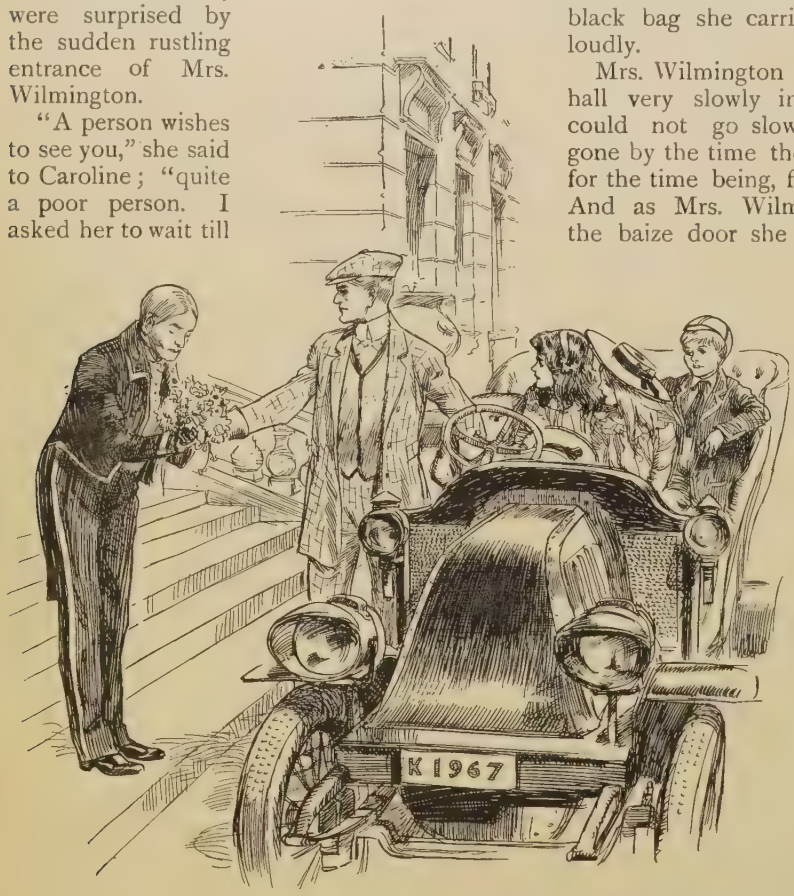
"I *know* it is when *you* think it; and when we think it it's the other way," said Caroline. "Oh, Pax! Pax! Pax!"

"All right," said Rupert. "I had a good

swim. Your Mr. Penfold's not half a bad sort. He taught me a new side-stroke." But it was plain that Rupert's inside self still felt cloudy and far from comfortable.

Next day the three C.'s and Rupert, in the middle of Irish stew, were surprised by the sudden rustling entrance of Mrs. Wilmington.

"A person wishes to see you," she said to Caroline; "quite a poor person. I asked her to wait till dinner was completed, but she says that she hopes you will see her now, as she ought to commence going home almost at once."



"THE FOOTMAN SAID, 'YES, M'LORD,' AS THOUGH HE HAD NEVER SEEN THE BOUQUET BEFORE."

"Of course," said Caroline; "it must be the mineral woman."

"She seemed to me," said Mrs. Wilmington, "to have an animal face."

But Caroline was already in the hall, and the figure that rose politely from the oak chair was plainly—though disguised in her Sunday clothes—that of the mineral woman.

"Oh, miss!" she said. "Oh, miss!" She took hold of both Caroline's hands and shook them; but that was not enough. Caroline found herself kissed on both cheeks, and then suddenly hugged, and "Oh, miss!" the mineral woman said; "Oh, miss!" And then she felt for her handkerchief in a black bag she carried and blew her nose loudly.

Mrs. Wilmington had gone through the hall very slowly indeed, but even she could not go slowly enough not to be gone by the time the mineral woman had, for the time being, finished with her nose. And as Mrs. Wilmington went through the baize door she heard again:—

"Oh, miss!"

Mrs. Wilmington came back five minutes later, and this time she heard:—

"And it's all right, miss; and two bright new five-pound notes 'to buy more rose trees with,' and a letter in his own write of hand thanking us for making the place so pretty, and I'm to be tenant for life, miss. And it's all your doing, bless your kind heart. So I came to tell you. I never thought I should feel like I do about any strange little gell. It was all your doing, miss, my dear."

Which was a very mysterious and exciting thing to be overheard by any housekeeper who was not in the secret. And a very heart-warming and pleasant thing to be listened to by a little girl who was.

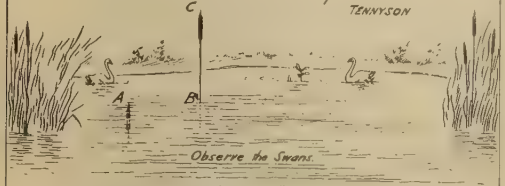
"You see," said Caroline, when she had told the others of the mineral woman's happiness, "the magic always works."

(*To be continued.*)

A Page of Picture Puzzles.

By SIDNEY J. MILLER.

"The bulrush in the pool."
TENNYSON



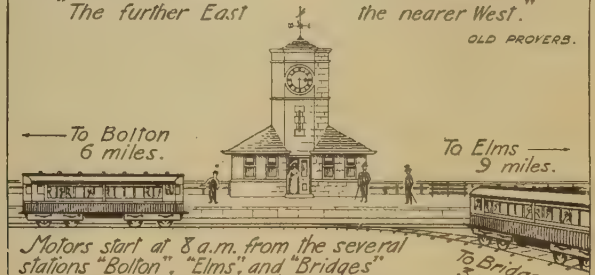
The two bulrushes A and B are three feet apart as they stand in the water, and their tips A and C are five feet apart. The tall rush forced by the wind is submerged (without being bent) till its tip just shews on the surface, at a distance equal to twice that of its original height above the surface

What is the depth of the Water?

A man goes out between 4 and 5 o'clock and on returning about 3 hours after, finds that the hands have exactly changed places

At what time did he go out?

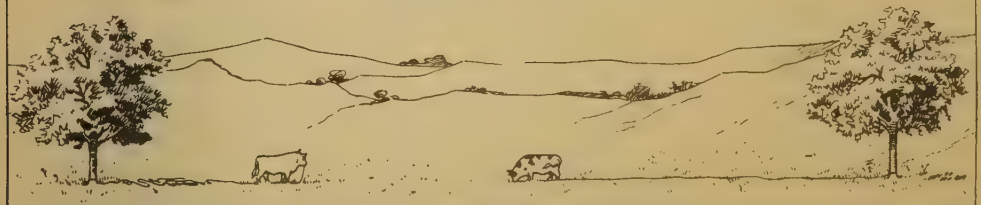
"The further East the nearer West."
OLD PROVERB.



Motors start at 8 a.m. from the several stations "Bolton", "Elms", and "Bridges" and run to and from "The Clock" at a uniform speed of 6 miles an hour, (including intermediate stoppings) but with a wait of 5 minutes at each of the 4 stops named. The Conductor of the "Bolton" car has to get to "Elms" by exchanging duties with the other Conductors.

When can he arrive at "Elms"?

"BULL RUN."



These aged bulls are tethered to the trees which are 50 yards apart. Each tether measures 25 yards after straining. Hooks are driven in the trees at the nearest points, and the tethers fastened to them are carried round the trees, and passed through staples at the 3-quarter girth. The other ends of the tethers are attached to the bulls' nose-rings. The girth of each tree is 22 inches. The Owner said the bulls could not reach each other, yet they often stood side by side in the direction of their taut tethers.

How closely could the bulls bring their heads together?

CURIOSITIES.

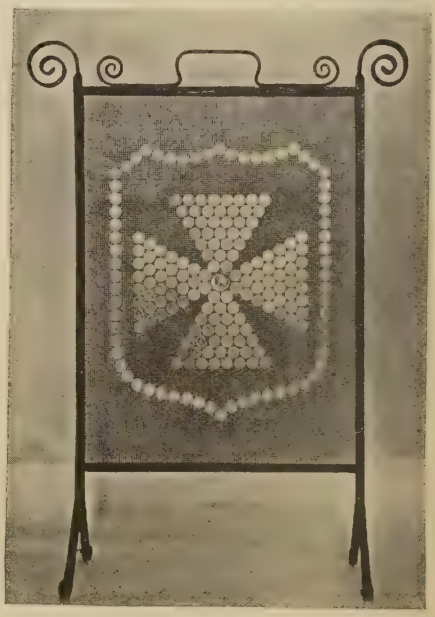
[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

STRANGE CUSTOM OF SOME STRANGE PETS.

I HAVE had these two little wood-chucks ever since they had their eyes open, and when they were too young to eat food of any kind I had to feed them from a bottle like a baby. Some people do not believe that wood-chucks—or ground-hogs, to give them the name by which they are better known—come out to see their shadow on Candlemas Day. They are inclined to scoff at the idea, but my experience with these animals has proved it to be true. They went to sleep during the latter part of October, since when I have watched them very closely to see if they woke up, but never found them awake. I took them out of the nest and they appeared to be dead, except for a slight movement of their heads and the beating of their hearts. On February 2nd I went to look at them in the afternoon, and found them awake, playing in their cage and very happy. They stayed out for three days and ate a considerable quantity of food, and they then went back to sleep and have slept ever since.—Mr. E. B. Cleminger, Frozel, Minn., U.S.A.

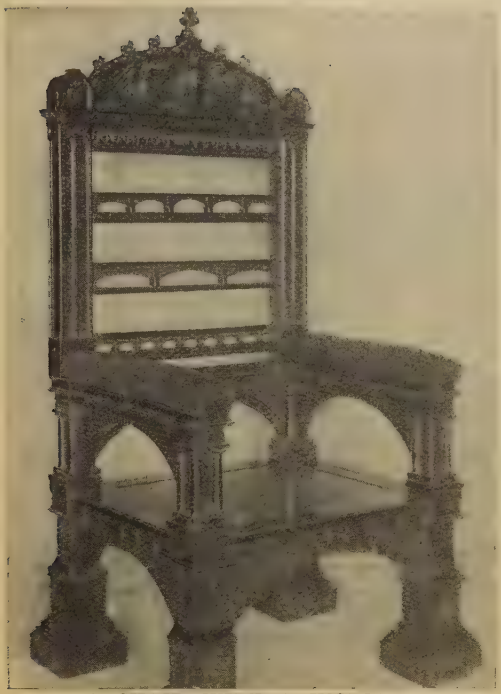
A SAFE OFFER.

THE erection of the Pilot Knob Hotel at Yuma, Arizona, was prompted by the opening of the Yuma Irrigation Project, one of the big irrigation plans started by ex-President Roosevelt, under which thousands of acres of desert land are made to "blossom as the rose." The place, as the small sign states, is 3,127 miles west of Broadway, New York — a mere nothing in this country of magnificent distances. The legend, "Free Board Every Day the Sun Doesn't Shine," is an up-to-date variety of the "Pay To-day, Credit To-morrow" signs that occasionally appear in England, and in Arizona the landlord is taking no chances on his offer. It may be added that 90,000 acres are to be made irrigable under this Yuma project.—Mr. Allan Dunn, 2,004, Hyde Street, San Francisco, California.



FIRE-SCREENS IN FARTHINGS.

THE fire-screen here shown is composed of 206 farthings (King Edward VII.), which were dipped bright and lacquered, the centre coin being a penny silver-plated. The design is mounted on a copper-gauze background, which is bronzed and partly rubbed off to give an antique finish; while the frame is made of wrought-iron and finished dull black. Over-all dimensions are: Height, 2ft. 10in.; width, 2ft.; the panel being 2ft. by 18in.—Mr. Thos. B. Baker, 6, Upper Baker Street, Lloyd Square, London, W.C.



A CHAIR WITH A HISTORY.

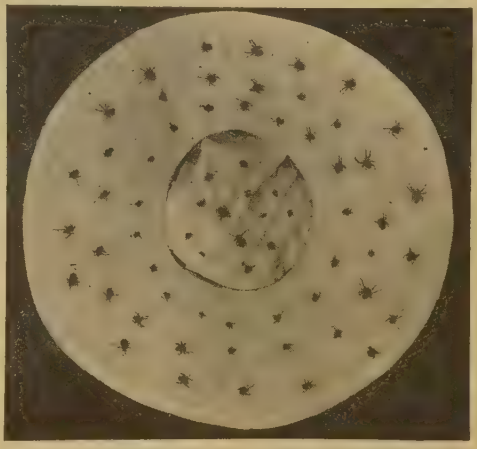
AN inscription cut on the stone which forms the seat of this fine old chair testifies to its having been made entirely from wood and stone taken in 1832 from the foundation of old London Bridge, after having remained there for six hundred and fifty-six years. The inscription reads: "I am part of the first stone that was put down for the foundation of Old London Bridge in June 1176 by a priest named Peter, who was Vicar of Colchurch in London, and I remained there undisturbed safe on the same Oak piles this chair is made from, till the Reverend William John Jolliffe Curate of Colmar Hampshire took me up in July 1832 when clearing away the Old Bridge after New London Bridge was completed." It will be noticed that models of several of London's bridges have been incorporated in the design of the chair, which is the property of the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers. —Mr. T. Sturdee, 157, Malpas Road, Brockley.

WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION?

GET a silver dessert-spoon and put it at right angles in front of you on a table. Next get a gold ring, a wedding-ring preferred, and to it tie a piece of thread about fifteen inches long. Twist the other end of the cotton round your forefinger two or three times and bring it over the point of the thumb, with the nail down. Rest your elbow on the table and suspend the ring about an eighth of an inch above the centre of the handle of the spoon, keeping the hand as steady as possible. If you are a man the ring will oscillate up and down the spoon. Next put your free hand on the table and ask a woman to lay her hand on yours. Watch the ring carefully, and you will notice that it will gradually cease to swing along the spoon, but will commence to swing across it. If a woman holds the thread it is *vice versa*. I have known of only one case in which the experiment has failed. Can this be explained?—Mr. W. Greene, Ivybank, Monkstown, Co. Cork.

HOW MANY PAGES ARE THERE?

THESE six volumes all contain an equal number of pages. The sum of the numbers on the first and last pages of the whole six volumes is 9,222. How many pages are there in each volume?—Mr. Harold M. Haskell, 67, Appleton Street, Manchester, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

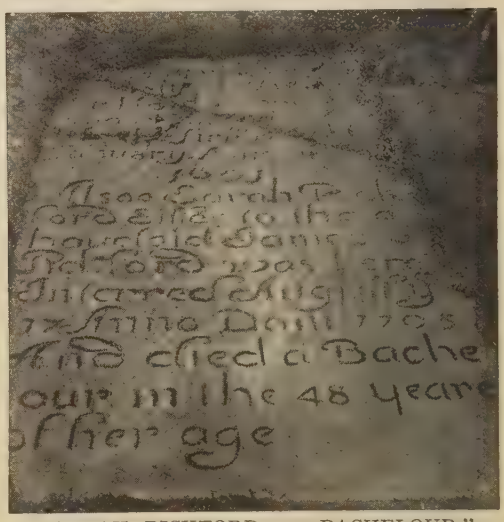


A WASP'S LARDER.

THE photograph I send you shows a white linen hat lying upside down on the grass with white gloves filling the crown. Arranged on the gloves and underside of the brim are between fifty and sixty spiders, which were taken from the nest of a mason wasp. The wasps build strange little nests of two or three rooms, made of tiny pieces of clay carried in and fitted together by the insect herself. In each "room" she lays an egg, which she packs carefully round with spiders, brought in one at a time and stung into insensibility—they seem almost like drugged spiders. When the room is packed closely it is tightly sealed up with more clay and left. The spiders neither wake again nor die; but when the egg is hatched there is living, but unresisting, food for the grub of the wasp to start feeding on straightaway. The spiders in the photograph were found in a "three-roomed" nest, not more than three inches long, built in a crack between two boards at the side of an old boat landing. We had fastened our boat and were lunching among the beautiful bush and ferns for which the west coast of the South Island of New Zealand is famous.—Miss M. Hitchcock, care of National Bank of New Zealand, 17, Moorgate Street, London, E.C.

ANOTHER "SONG OF A SHIRT."

THERE are few famous shirts in the world, but one of the number forms the subject of the accompanying photograph. Look at it! It only measures eight by eight inches, and when folded up does not even fill the tiny box seen in the photograph, in which it is always kept. But a more famous shirt it would be hard to find. It is a christening shirt, and two and a half centuries have passed since it was made in Flanders of the best lace and linen then obtainable, to the order of an English admiral. It reposes in its tiny box at sunny Worthing, in the home of the inventor of a well-known dog-biscuit. Some thousand children had been christened in the wee garment even several years ago. Think of it! A thousand children and more have worn it at their baptism, and among the number have been several who have grown up to be famous as soldiers, sailors, authors, travellers, and scholars. So it is not to be wondered at that the little shirt has come to be looked upon as a "lucky" shirt and a talisman against all ill. Mothers send for it from distant lands, to which fate has taken them, believing that if their children are christened in it good fortune will smile upon them all their lives. It has passed safely through several battles on the sea, including the Battle of Trafalgar. It went down with the ill-fated *Royal George*, the log-book of which vessel may be seen in the same house at Worthing in which the shirt rests. Years later it was wrecked on the Goodwin Sands in a small passenger boat, and after being lost for several weeks was picked up on the seashore at Deal and in course of time restored to its owner, whose address happened to be on an envelope inside the box. It was once wrecked off the coast of France and once again found on the seashore, but this time inside a large trunk. In a house at Streatham it had the distinction of passing safely through a fire which completely gutted the building with the exception of one room—the room in which the shirt was put away. On three occasions it has been found in the Dead-Letter Department of the General Post Office, and been lost in the streets of provincial towns on no fewer than twenty-one occasions.—Mr. J. C. Bristow-Noble, Rookwood, Warnham, Horsham, Sussex.


Also Sarah Pickford sister to the
above said James Pickford was here
interred August 17 Anno Dom 1705
And died a Bachelour in the 48 yeare
of her age

"SARAH PICKFORD . . . BACHELOUR."

THIS very curious epitaph may be seen on a gravestone in Prestbury Churchyard. The inscription reads: "Also Sarah Pickford, sister to the above-said James Pickford, was here interred August 17, Anno Dom. 1705. And died a Bachelour in the 48 yeare of her age." It will be noticed that the letter "f" is frequently used instead of the letter "s." I think this is the only gravestone which tells of a woman dying a "bachelour."—Mr. Thomas Cooper, Chapel House, Prestbury, Macclesfield, Cheshire.

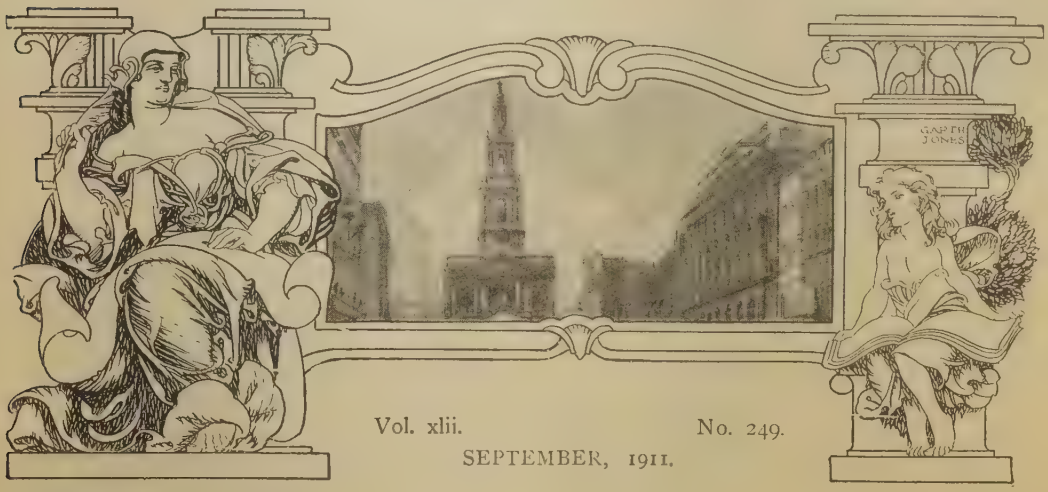
A LEAF WITH AN APPETITE.

I AM sending you three photographs, taken at intervals of about forty minutes, of a sundew leaf (*Drosera rotundifolia*), near to which I had suspended a tiny fragment of meat, using a hair attached to a needle. The photographs show clearly how the leaf bent over and captured the meat. The puzzle is: How did the leaf know that the meat was within its reach? One is driven to the conclusion that plants are more "sensible" than is generally supposed.—Mr. Alfred H. Bastin, Wensley, Upper Redlands Road, Reading.

"FLEURETTE DANCED WITH ARISTIDE, AS LIGHT AS AN AUTUMN LEAF TOSSED BY THE WIND."

(See page 247.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE



Vol. xlii. No. 249.
SEPTEMBER, 1911.

The Joyous Adventures of Aristide Pujol.

By WILLIAM J. LOCKE.
Illustrated by Alec Ball.

V.—The Adventure of Fleurette.

ONE day, when Aristide was discoursing on the inexhaustible subject of woman, I pulled him up.

"My good friend," said I, "you seem to have fallen in love with every woman you have ever met. But for how many of them have you really cared?"

"*Mon Dieu!* For all of them!" he cried, springing from his chair and making a windmill of himself.

"Come, come," said I; "all that amorousness is just Gallic exuberance. Have you ever been really in love in your life?"

"How should I know?" said he. But he lit a cigarette, turned away, and looked out of window.

There was a short silence. He shrugged his shoulders, apparently in response to his own thoughts. Then he turned again suddenly, threw his cigarette into the fire, and thrust his hands into his pockets. He sighed.

"Perhaps there was Fleurette," said he, not looking at me. "*Est-ce qu'on sait jamais?* That wasn't her real name—it was Marie-Joséphine; but people called her Fleurette. She looked like a flower, you know."

I nodded in order to signify my elementary acquaintance with the French tongue.

"The most delicate little flower you can conceive," he continued. "*Tiens*, she was a tired lily—so white, and her hair the flash of gold on it—and she had eyes—*des yeux de pervenche*, as we say in French. What is *pervenche* in English—that little pale-blue flower?"

"Periwinkle," said I.

"Periwinkle eyes! *Mon Dieu*, what a language! Ah, no! She had *des yeux de pervenche*. . . . She was *diaphane*, diaphanous . . . impalpable as cigarette-smoke . . .

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a little nose like nothing at all, with nostrils like infinitesimal sea-shells. Anyone could have made a mouthful of her. . . . Ah! *Cré nom d'un chien!* Life is droll. It has no common sense. It is the game of a mountebank. . . . I've never told you about Fleurette. It was this way."

And the story he narrated I will do my best now to set down.

The good M. Bocardon, of the Hôtel de la Curatterie at Nîmes, whose grateful devotion to Aristide has already been recorded in these chronicles, had a brother in Paris who managed the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse (strange conjuncture), a flourishing third-rate hostelry in the neighbourhood of the Halles Centrales. Thither flocked sturdy Britons in knickerbockers, stockings, and cloth caps, Teutons with tin botanizing boxes (for lunch transportation), and American school-marms realizing at last the dream of their modest and laborious lives. Accommodation was cheap, manners were easy, and knowledge of the gay city less than rudimentary.

To M. Bocardon of Paris Aristide, one August morning, brought glowing letters of introduction from M. and Mme. Bocardon of Nîmes. M. Bocardon of Paris welcomed Aristide as a Provençal and a brother. He brought out from a cupboard in his private bureau an hospitable bottle of old Armagnac, and discoursed with Aristide on the seductions of the South. It was there that he longed to retire—to a dainty little hotel of his own with a smart *clientèle*. The *clientèle* of the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse was not to his taste. He spoke slightingly of his guests.

"There are people who know how to travel," said he, "and people who don't. These lost muttons here don't, and they make hotel-keeping a nightmare instead of a joy. A hundred times a day have I to tell them the way to Nôtre Dame. *Pouah!*" said he, gulping down his disgust and the rest of his Armagnac, "it is back-breaking."

"*Tu sais, mon vieux,*" cried Aristide—he had the most lightning way of establishing an intimacy—"I have an idea. These lost sheep need a shepherd."

"*Eh bien?*" said M. Bocardon.

"*Eh bien,*" said Aristide, "Why should not I be the shepherd, the official shepherd attached to the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse?"

"Explain yourself," said M. Bocardon.

Aristide, letting loose his swift imagination, explained copiously, and hypnotized M. Bocardon with his glittering eye, until he had assured to himself a means of livelihood. From that moment he became the familiar genius of the hotel. Scorning the title of "guide," lest he should be associated in the minds of the guests with the squalid scoundrels who infest the Boulevard, he constituted himself "Directeur de l'Agence Pujol." An obfuscated Bocardon formed the rest of the agency and pocketed a percentage of Aristide's earnings, and Aristide, addressed as "Director" by the Anglo-Saxons, "M. le Directeur" by the Latins, and "Herr Direktor" by the Teutons, walked about like a peacock in a barn-yard.

At that period, and until he had learned up Baedeker by heart, a process which nearly gave him brain-fever, and still, he declares, brings terror into his slumbers, he knew little more of the history, topography, and art-treasures of Paris than the flock he shepherded. He must have dealt out paralyzing information. The Britons and the Germans seemed not to heed; but now and then the American school-marms unmasked the charlatan. On such occasions his unfaltering impudence reached heights truly sublime. The sharp-witted ladies looked in his eyes, forgot their wrongs, and, if he had told them that the Eiffel Tower had been erected by the Pilgrim Fathers, would have accepted the statement meekly.

"My friend," said Aristide, with Provençal flourish and braggadocio, "I never met a woman that would not sooner be misled by me than be taught by the whole Faculty of the Sorbonne."

He had been practising this honourable profession for about a month, lodging with the good Mme. Bidoux at 213bis, Rue Saint-Honoré, when, one morning, in the vestibule of the hotel, he ran into his old friend Batterby, whom he had known during the days of his professorship of French at the Academy for Young Ladies in Manchester. The pair had been fellow-lodgers in the same house in the Rusholme Road; but, whereas Aristide lived in one sunless bed-sitting-room looking on a forest of chimney-pots, Batterby, man of luxury and ease, had a suite of apartments on the first floor and kept an inexhaustible supply of whisky, cigars, and such-like etceteras of the opulent, and the very ugliest prize bull-pup you can imagine. Batterby, in gaudy raiment, went to an office in Manchester; in gaudier raiment he often attended race meetings. He had rings and scarf-pins and rattled gold in his trousers pockets. He might have been an insufferable young man for a poverty-stricken teacher of French to

have as a fellow-lodger; but he was not. Like all those born to high estate, he made no vulgar parade of his wealth, and to Aristide he showed the most affable hospitality. A friendship had arisen between them, which the years had idealized rather than impaired. So when they met that morning in the vestibule of the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse their greetings were fervent and prolonged.

In person Batterby tended towards burliness. He had a red, jolly face, divided unequally by a great black moustache, and his manner was hearty. He slapped Aristide on the back many times and shook him by the shoulders. "We must have a drink on this straight away, old man," said he.

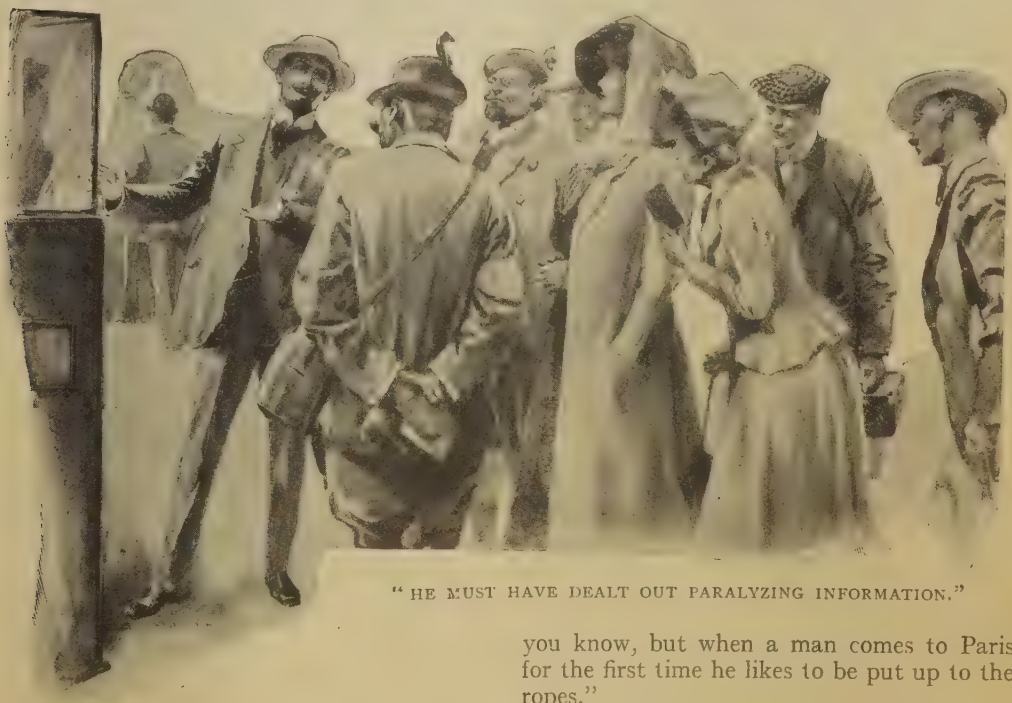
"You're so strange, you English," said Aristide. "The moment you have an emotion you must celebrate it by a drink. 'My dear fellow, I've just come into a fortune; let us have a drink.' Or, 'My friend, my poor old father has just been run over by an omnibus; let us have a drink.' My good Reginald, look at the clock. It is only nine in the morning."

"Rot!" said Reginald. "Drink is good at any time."

They went into the dark and deserted smoking-room, where Batterby ordered Scotch and soda and Aristide, an abstemious man, a vermouth *sec*.

"What's that muck?" asked Batterby, when the waiter brought the drinks. Aristide explained. "Whisky's good enough for me," laughed the other. Aristide laughed too, out of politeness and out of joy at meeting his old friend.

"With you playing at guide here," said Batterby, when he had learned Aristide's position in the hotel, "it seems I have come to the right shop. There are no flies on me,



"HE MUST HAVE DEALT OUT PARALYZING INFORMATION."

you know, but when a man comes to Paris for the first time he likes to be put up to the ropes."

"Your first visit to Paris?" cried Aristide. "*Mon vieux*, what wonders are going to ravish your eyes! What a time you are going to have!"

Batterby bit off the end of a great black cigar.

"If the missus will let me," said he.

"Missus? Your wife? You are married, my dear Reginald?" Aristide leaped, in his unexpected fashion, from his chair and almost embraced him. "Ah, but you are happy, you are lucky. It was always like that. You open your mouth and the larks fall ready roasted into it! My congratulations. And she is here, in this hotel, your wife? Tell me about her."

Batterby lit his cigar. "She's nothing to write home about," he said, modestly. "She's French ——"

"French? No—you don't say so!" exclaimed Aristide, in ecstasy.

"Well, she was brought up in France from

her childhood, but her parents were Finns. Funny place for people to come from—Finland,—isn't it? You could never expect it—might just as well think of 'em coming from Lapland. She's an orphan. I met her in London."

"But that's romantic! And she is young, pretty?"

"Oh, yes; in a way," said the proprietary Briton.

"And her name?"

"Oh, she has a fool name—Fleurette. I wanted to call her Flossie, but she didn't like it."

"I should think not," said Aristide. "Fleurette is an adorable name."

"I suppose it's right enough," said Batterby. "But if I want to call her good old Flossie, why should she object? You married, old man? No? Well, wait till you are. You think women are angels all wrapped up in feathers and wings beneath their toggery, don't you? Well, they're just blooming porcupines, all bristling with objections."

"*Mais, allons, donc!*" cried Aristide. "You love her, your beautiful Finnish orphan brought up in France and romantically met in London, with the adorable name?"

"Oh, that's all right," said the easy Batterby, lifting his half-emptied glass. "Here's luck!"

"Ah—no!" said Aristide, leaning forward and clinking his wineglass against the other's tumbler. "Here is to madame."

When they returned to the vestibule they found Mrs. Batterby patiently awaiting her lord. She rose from her seat at the approach of the two men, a fragile flower of a girl, about three-and-twenty, pale as a lily, with exquisite though rather large features, and with eyes of the blue of the *pervenche* (in deference to Aristide I use the French name), which seemed to smile trustfully through perpetual tears. She was dressed in pale, shadowy blue—graceful, impalpable, just like the smoke, said Aristide, curling upwards from a cigarette.

"Reggie has spoken of you many times, monsieur," said Fleurette, after the introduction had been effected.

Aristide was touched. "Fancy him remembering me! *Ce bon vieux Reginald.* Madame," said he, "your husband is the best fellow in the world."

"Feed him with sugar and he won't bite," said Batterby; whereat they all laughed, as if it had been a very good joke.

"Well, what about this Paris of yours?" he said, after a while. "The missus knows as little of it as I do."

"Really?" asked Aristide.

"I lived all my life in Brest before I went to England," she said, modestly.

"She wants to see all the sights, the Louvre, the Morgue, the Cathedral of What's-its-name that you've got here. I've got to go round, too. Pleases her and don't hurt me. You must tote us about. We'll have a cab, old girl, as you can't do much walking, and good old Pujol will come with us."

"But that is ideal!" cried Aristide, flying to the door to order the cab; but before he could reach it he was stopped by three or four waiting tourists, who pointed some to the clock, some to the wagonette standing outside, and asked the director when the personally-conducted party was to start. Aristide, who had totally forgotten the responsibilities attached to the directorship of the Agence Pujol and, but for this reminder, would have blissfully left his sheep to err and stray over Paris by themselves, returned crestfallen to his friends and explained the situation.

"But we'll join the party," said the cheery Batterby. "The more the merrier—good old beanfeast! Will there be room?"

"Plenty," replied Aristide, brightening. "But would it meet the wishes of madame?"

Her pale face flushed ever so slightly and the soft eyes fluttered at him a half-astonished, half-grateful glance.

"With my husband and you, monsieur, I should love it," she said.

So Mr. and Mrs. Batterby joined the personally-conducted party, as they did the next morning, and the next, and several mornings after, and received esoteric information concerning the monuments of Paris that is hidden even from the erudite. The evenings, however, Aristide, being off duty, devoted to their especial entertainment. He took them to riotous and perspiring restaurants where they dined gorgeously for three francs fifty, wine included; to open-air *cafés-concerts* in the Champs Elysées, which Fleurette found infinitely diverting, but which bored Batterby, who knew not French, to stertorous slumber; to crowded brasseries on the Boulevard, where Batterby awakened, under a steady flow of whisky, to appreciative contemplation of Paris life. As in the old days of the Rusholme Road, Batterby flung his money about with unostentatious generosity. He was out for a beano, he declared, and hang the expense! Aristide, whose purse, scantily filled (truth to say) by the profits of the Agence Pujol, could contribute but modestly to this reckless expenditure, found himself forced to accept his

friend's lavish hospitality. Once or twice, delicately, he suggested withdrawal from the evening's dissipation.

"But, my good M. Pujol," said Fleurette, with childish tragicality in her *pervenche* eyes, "without you we shall be lost. We shall not enjoy ourselves at all, at all."

So Aristide, out of love for his friend, and out of he knew not what for his friend's wife, continued to show them the sights of Paris. They went to the cabarets of Montmartre—the *Ciel*, where one is served by angels; the *Enfer*, where one is served by red devils in a Tartarean lighting; the *Néant*, where one has coffins for tables—than all of which vulgarity has imagined no more joy-killing dreariness, but which caused Fleurette to grip Aristide's hand tight in scared wonderment and Batterby to chuckle exceedingly. They went to the Bal Bullier and various other balls undreamed of by the tourist, where Fleurette danced with Aristide, as light as an autumn leaf tossed by the wind, and Batterby absorbed a startling assortment of alcohols. In a word, Aristide procured for his friends prodigious diversion.

"How do you like this, old girl?" Batterby asked one night, at the Moulin de la Galette, a dizzying, not very decorous, and to the unsophisticated visitor a dangerous place of entertainment. "Better than Great Coram Street, isn't it?"

She smiled and laid her hand on his. She was a woman of few words but of infinite caressing actions.

"I ought to let you into a secret, Aristide. This is our honeymoon."

"Who would have thought it?" said he.

"A fortnight ago she was being killed in a Bloomsbury boarding-house. There were two of 'em—she and a girl called Carrie. I used to call 'em Fetch and Carrie. This one was Fetch. Well, she fetched me, didn't you, old girl? And now you're Mrs. Reginald Batterby, living at your ease, eh?"

"Madame would grace any sphere," said Aristide.

"I wish I had more education," said Fleurette, humbly. "M. Pujol and yourself are so clever that you must laugh at me."

"We do sometimes, but you mustn't mind us. Remember—at the what-you-call-it—the little shanty at Versailles——?"

"The Grand Trianon," said Aristide.

"That's it. When you were showing us the rooms. 'What is the Empress Josephine doing now?'" He mimicked her accent. "Ha! ha! And the poor soul gone to glory a couple of hundred years ago."

The little mouth puckered at the corners and moisture gathered in the blue eyes.

"*Mais, mon Dieu,* it was natural, the mistake," cried Aristide, gallantly. "The Empress Eugénie, the wife of another Napoleon, is still living."

"*Bien sûr,*" said Fleurette. "How was I to know?"

"Never mind, old girl," said Batterby. "You're living all right, and out of that beastly boarding-house, and that's the chief thing. Another month of it would have killed her. She had a cough that shook her to bits. She's looking better already, isn't she, Pujol?"

After this Aristide learned much of her simple history, which she, at first, had been too shy to reveal. The child of Finnish sea-folk who had drifted to Brest and died there, she had been adopted by an old Breton sea-dog and his wife. On their death she had entered, as maid, the service of an English lady residing in the town, who afterwards had taken her to England. After a while reverses of fortune had compelled the lady to dismiss her, and she had taken the situation in the boarding-house, where she had ruined her health and met the opulent and conquering Batterby. She had not much chance, poor child, of acquiring a profound knowledge of the history of the First Empire; but her manners were refined and her ways gentle and her voice was soft; and Aristide, citizen of the world, for whom caste distinctions existed not, thought her the most exquisite flower grown in earth's garden. He told her so, much to her blushing satisfaction.

One night, about three weeks after the Batterbys' arrival in Paris, Batterby sent his wife to bed and invited Aristide to accompany him for half an hour to a neighbouring *café*. He looked grave and troubled.

"I've been upset by a telegram," said he, when drinks had been ordered. "I'm called away to New York on business. I must catch the boat from Cherbourg to-morrow evening. Now, I can't take Fleurette with me. Women and business don't mix. She has jolly well got to stay here. I sha'n't be away more than a month. I'll leave her plenty of money to go on with. But what's worrying me is—how is she going to stick it? So look here, old man, you're my pal, aren't you?"

He stretched out his hand. Aristide grasped it impulsively.

"Why, of course, *mon vieux!*"

"If I felt that I could leave her in your charge, all on the square, as a real straight pal—I should go away happy."

"She shall be my sister," cried Aristide, "and I shall give her all the devotion of a brother. . . . I swear it—*tiens*—what can I swear it on?" He flung out his arms and looked round the *café* as if in search of an object. "I swear it on the head of my mother. Have no fear. I, Aristide Pujol, have never betrayed the sacred obligations of friendship. I accept her as a consecrated trust."

"You only need to have said 'Right-o,' and I would have believed you," said Batterby. "I haven't told her yet. There'll be blubbering all night. Let us have another drink."

When Aristide arrived at the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse at nine o'clock the next morning he found that Batterby had left Paris by the early train. Fleurette he did not meet until he brought back the sight-seers to the fold in the evening. She had wept much during the day; but she smiled bravely on Aristide. A woman could not stand in the way of her husband's business.

"By the way, what is Reginald's business?" Aristide asked.

She did not know. Reginald never spoke to her of such things; perhaps she was too ignorant to understand.

"But he will make a lot of money by going to America," she said. Then she was silent for a few moments. "*Mon Dieu!*" she sighed, at last. "How long the day has been!"

It was the beginning of many long days for Fleurette. Reginald did not write from Cherbourg or cable from New York, as he had promised, and the return American mail brought no letter. The days passed drearily. Sometimes, for the sake of human society, she accompanied the tourist parties of the Agence Pujol; but the thrill had passed from the Morgue and the glory had departed from Versailles. Sometimes she wandered out by herself into the streets and public gardens; but, pretty, unprotected, and fragile, she attracted the attention of evil or careless men, which struck cold terror into her heart. Most often she sat alone and listless in the hotel, reading the feuilleton of the *Petit Journal*, and waiting for the post to bring her news.

"*Mon Dieu*, M. Pujol, what can have happened?"

"Nothing at all, *chère petite madame*"—question and answer came many times a day. "Only some foolish mischance which will soon be explained. The good Reginald has written and his letter has been lost in the post. He has been obliged to go on business to San Francisco or Buenos Ayres—*et, que voulez-vous?* one cannot have letters from those places in twenty-four hours!"

"If only he had taken me with him!"

"But, dear Mme. Fleurette, he could not expose you to the hardships of travel. You, who are as fragile as a cobweb, how could you go to Patagonia or Senegal or Baltimore, those wild places where there are no comforts for women? You must be reasonable. I am sure you will get a letter soon—or else in a day or two he will come, with his good, honest face as if nothing had occurred—these English are like that—and call for whisky and soda. Be comforted, *chère petite madame*."

Aristide did his best to comfort her, threw her in the companionship of decent women staying at the hotel, and devoted his evenings to her entertainment. But the days passed, and Reginald Batterby, with the good, honest face, neither wrote nor ordered whisky and soda. Fleurette began to pine and fade.

One day she came to Aristide.

"M. Pujol, I have no more money left."

"*Bigre!*" said Pujol. "The good Bocardon will have to give you credit. I'll arrange it."

"But I already owe for three weeks," said Fleurette.

Aristide sought Bocardon. One week more was all the latter dared allow.

"But her husband will return and pay you. He is my old and intimate friend. I make myself hoarse in telling it to you, woodenhead that you are!"

But Bocardon, who had to account to higher powers, the proprietors of the hotel, was helpless. At the end of the week Fleurette was called upon to give up her room. She wept with despair; Aristide wept with fury; Bocardon wept out of sympathy. Already, said Bocardon, the proprietors would blame him for not using the legal right to detain madame's luggage.

"*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!* what is to become of me?" wailed Fleurette.

"You forget, madame," said Aristide, with one of his fine flourishes, "that you are the sacred trust of Aristide Pujol."

"But I can't accept your money," objected Fleurette.

"*Tron de l'air!*" he cried. "Did your husband put you in my charge or did he not? Am I your legal guardian, or am I not? If I am your legal guardian, what right have you to question the arrangements made by your husband? Answer me that."

Fleurette, too gentle and too miserable for intricate argument, sighed,

"But it is your money, all the same."

Aristide turned to Bocardon. "Try," said he, "to convince a woman! Do you want proofs? Wait there a minute while I get them from the safe of the Agence Pujol."

He disappeared into the bureau, where, secure from observation, he tore an oblong strip from a sheet of stiff paper, and, using an indelible pencil, wrote out something fantastic halfway between a cheque and a bill of exchange, forged as well as he could from memory the signature of Reginald Batterby—the imitation of handwriting was one of Aristide's many odd accomplishments—and made the document look legal by means of a receipt stamp, which he took from Bocardon's drawer. He returned to the vestibule with the strip folded and somewhat crumpled in his hand. "*Voilà*," said he, handing it boldly to Fleurette. "Here is your husband's guarantee to me, your guardian, for four thousand francs."

Fleurette examined the forgery. The stamp impressed her. For the simple souls of France there is magic in *papier timbré*.

"SHE TOLD HER TALES OF HER FATHER AND MOTHER."

"It was my husband who wrote this?" she asked, curiously.

"*Mais, oui*," said Aristide, with an offended air of challenge.

Fleurette's eyes filled again with tears.

"I only inquired," she said, "because this is the first time I have seen his handwriting."

"*Ma pauvre petite*," said Aristide.

"I will do whatever you tell me, M. Pujol," said Fleurette, humbly.

"Good! That is talking like *une bonne petite dame raisonnable*. Now, I know a woman made up of holy bread whom St. Paul and St. Peter are fighting to have next them when she goes to Paradise. Her name is Mme. Bidoux, and she sells cabbages and asparagus and charcoal at No. 213bis, Rue Saint-Honoré. She will arrange our little affair. Bocardon, will you have madame's trunks sent to that address?"

He gave his arm to Fleurette, and walked out of the hotel, with serene confidence in the powers of the sainted Mme. Bidoux. Fleurette accompanied him unquestioningly. Of course she might have said: "If you hold negotiable security from my husband to the amount of four thousand francs, why should I exchange the comforts of the hotel for the doubtful accommodation of the sainted Mme. Bidoux who sells cabbages?" But I repeat that Fleurette was a simple soul who took for granted the wisdom of so flamboyant and virile a creature as Aristide Pujol.

Away up at the top of No. 213bis, Rue Saint-Honoré, was a little furnished room to let, and there Aristide installed his sacred charge. Mme. Bidoux, who, as she herself maintained, would have cut herself into four pieces for Aristide—did he not save her dog's life? Did he not marry her daughter to the brigadier of gendarmes (*sale voyou!*), who would otherwise have left her lamenting? Was he not the most mirific of God's creatures?—Mme. Bidoux, although not quite appreciating Aristide's quixotic delicacy, took the forlorn and fragile wisp of misery to her capacious bosom. She made her free of the cabbages and charcoal. She provided her, at a risible charge, with succulent meals. She told her tales of her father and mother, of her neighbours, of the domestic differences between the concierge and his wife (soothing idyll for an Ariadne!), of the dirty thief of a brigadier of gendarmes, of her bodily ailments—her body was so large that they were many; of the picturesque death, through apoplexy, of the late M. Bidoux; the brave woman, in short, gave her of her heart's best. As far as human hearts could provide a bed for Fleurette, that bed was of roses. As a matter of brutal fact, it was narrow and nubbly, and the little uncarpeted room was ten feet by seven; but to provide it Aristide went to his own bed hungry. And if the bed of a man's hunger is not to be accounted as one of roses, there ought to be a vote for the reduction of the Recording Angel's salary.

It must not be imagined that Fleurette thought the bed hard. Her bed of life from childhood had been nubbly. She never dreamed of complaining of her little room under the stars, and she sat among the cabbages like a tired lily, quite contented with her material lot. But she drooped and drooped, and the cough returned and shook her; and Aristide, realizing the sacredness of his charge, became a prey to anxious terrors.

"Mère Bidoux," said he, "she must have lots of good, nourishing, tender, underdone beef, good fillets, and *entrecôtes saignantes*."

Mme. Bidoux sighed. She had a heart, but she also had a pocket which, like Aristide's, was not over-filled. "That costs dear, my poor friend," she said.

"What does it matter what it costs? It is I who provide," said Aristide, grandly.

And Aristide gave up tobacco and coffee and the mild refreshment at *cafés* essential to the existence of every Frenchman, and degraded his soul by taking half-franc tips from tourists—a source of income which, as Director, M. le Directeur, Herr Direktor of the Agence Pujol, he had hitherto scorned haughtily—in order to provide Fleurette with underdone beefsteaks.

All his leisure he devoted to her. She represented something that hitherto had not come into his life—something delicate, tender, ethereal, something of woman that was exquisitely adorable, apart from the flesh. Once, as he was sitting in the little shop, she touched his temple lightly with her fingers.

"Ah, you are good to me, Aristide."

He felt a thrill such as no woman's touch had ever caused to pass through him—far, far sweeter, cleaner, purer. If the *bon Dieu* could have given her to him then and there to be his wife, what bond could have been holier? But he had bound himself by a sacred obligation. His friend on his return should find him loyal.

"Who could help being good to you, little Fleurette?" said he. "Even an Apache would not tread on a lily of the valley!"

"But you put me in water and tend me so carefully."

"So that you can be fresh whenever the dear Reginald comes back."

She sighed. "Tell me what I can do for you, my good Aristide."

"Keep well and happy and be a valiant little woman," said he.

Fleurette tried hard to be valiant; but the effort exhausted her strength. As the days went on, even Aristide's inexhaustible conversation failed to distract her from

"IN DESPAIR ARISTIDE, TO COAX A SMILE FROM HER LIPS, PRACTISED HIS MANY QUEER ACCOMPLISHMENTS."

brooding. She lost the trick of laughter. In the evenings, when he was most with her, she would sit, either in the shop or in the little room at the back, her blue childish eyes fixed on him wistfully. At first he tried to lure her into the gay street; but walking tired her. He encouraged her to sit outside on the pavement of the Rue Saint-Honoré and join with Mme. Bidoux in the gossip of neighbours; but she listened to them with uncomprehending ears. In despair Aristide, to coax a smile from her lips, practised his many queer accomplishments. He conjured with cards; he juggled with oranges; he had a mountebank's trick of putting one leg round his neck; he imitated the voices of cats and pigs and ducks, till Mme. Bidoux held her sides with mirth. He spent time and thought in elaborating what he called *bonnes farces*, such as dressing himself up in Mme. Bidoux's

raiment and personifying a crabbed customer. Fleurette smiled but listlessly at all these comicalities.

One day she was taken ill. A doctor, summoned, said many learned words which Aristide and Mme. Bidoux tried hard to understand.

"But, after all, what is the matter with her?"

"She has no strength to struggle. She wants happiness."

"Can you tell me the druggist's where that can be procured?" asked Aristide.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. "I tell you the truth. It is one of those pulmonary cases. Happy, she will live; unhappy, she will die."

"My poor Mme. Bidoux, what is to be done?" asked Aristide, after the doctor had gone off with his modest fee. "How are we to make her happy?"

"If only she could have news of her husband!" replied Mme. Bidoux.

Aristide's anxieties grew heavier. It was November, when knickerbockered and culture-seeking tourists no longer fill the cheap hotels of Paris. The profits of the Agence Pujol dwindled. Aristide lived on bread and cheese, and foresaw the time when cheese would be a sinful luxury. Meanwhile Fleurette had her nourishing food, and grew more like the ghost of a lily every day. But her eyes followed Aristide, wherever he went in her presence, as if he were the god of her salvation.

One day Aristide, with an unexpected franc or two in his pocket, stopped in front of a *bureau de tabac*. A brown packet of caporal and a book of cigarette-papers—a cigarette rolled—how good it would be! He hesitated, and his glance fell on a collection of foreign stamps exposed in the window. Among them were twelve Honduras stamps all postmarked. He stared at them, fascinated.

"*Mon brave Aristide!*" he cried. "If the *bon Dieu* does not send you these vibrating inspirations, it is because you yourself have already conceived them!"

He entered the shop and emerged, not with caporal and cigarette-papers, but with the twelve Honduras stamps.

That night he sat up in his little bedroom at No. 213bis, Rue Saint-Honoré, until his candle failed, inditing a letter in English to Fleurette. At the head of his paper he wrote "Hotel Rosario, Honduras." And at the end of the letter he signed the name of Reginald Batterby. Where Honduras was, he had but a vague idea. For Fleurette, at any rate, it would be somewhere at the other end of the world, and she would not question any want of accuracy in local detail. Just before the light went out he read the letter through with great pride. Batterby alluded to the many letters he had posted from remote parts of the globe, gave glowing forecasts of the fortune that Honduras had in store for him, reminded her that he had placed sufficient funds for her maintenance in the hands of Aristide Pujol, and assured her that the time was not far off when she would be summoned to join her devoted husband.

"Mme. Bidoux was right," said he, before going to sleep. "This is the only way to make her happy."

The next day Fleurette received the letter. The envelope bore the postmarked Honduras stamp. It had been rubbed on the dusty pavement to take off the newness. It was in her husband's handwriting. There was no mistake about it—it was a letter from Honduras.

"Are you happier now, little doubting female St. Thomas that you are?" cried Aristide when she had told him the news.

She smiled at him out of grateful eyes, and touched his hand.

"Much happier, *mon bon ami*," she said, gently.

Later in the day she handed him a letter addressed to Batterby. It had no stamp.

"Will you post this for me, Aristide?"

Aristide put the letter in his pocket and turned sharply away, lest she should see a sudden rush of tears. He had not counted on this innocent trustfulness. He went to his room. The poor little letter! He had not the heart to destroy it. No; he would keep it till Batterby came; it was not his to destroy. So he threw it into a drawer.

Having once begun the deception, however, he thought it necessary to continue. Every week, therefore, he invented a letter from Batterby. To interest her he drew upon his Provençal imagination. He described combats with crocodiles, lion-hunts, feasts with terrific savages from the interior, who brought their lady wives chastely clad in petticoats made out of human teeth; he drew pictures of the town, a kind of palm-shaded Paris by the sea, where one ate ortolans and oysters as big as soup-plates, and where Chinamen with pigtails rode about the streets on camels. It was not a correct description of Honduras, but, all the same, an exotic atmosphere stimulating and captivating rose from the pages. With this it was necessary to combine expressions of affection.

At first it was difficult. Essential delicacy restrained him. He had also to keep in mind Batterby's vernacular. To address Fleurette, impalpable creation of fairyland, as "old girl" was particularly distasteful. By degrees, however, the artist prevailed. And then at last the man himself took to forgetting the imaginary writer and poured out words of love, warm, true, and passionate.

And every week Fleurette would smile and tell him the wondrous news, and would put into his own hands an unstamped letter to post, which he, with a wrench of the heart, would add to the collection in the drawer.

Once she said, diffidently, with an unwonted blush and her pale blue eyes swimming: "I write English so badly. Won't you read the letter and correct any mistakes?"

But Aristide laughed and licked the flap of the envelope and closed it. "What has love to do with spelling and grammar? The good Reginald would prefer your bad English to all the turned phrases of the Académie Française."

"It is as you like, Aristide," said Fleurette, with wistful eyes.

Yet, in spite of the weekly letters, Fleurette continued to droop. The winter came, and Fleurette was no longer able to stay among the cabbages of Mme. Bidoux. She lay on her bed in the little room, ten feet by seven, away, away at the top of the house in the Rue Saint-Honoré. The doctor, informed of her comparative happiness, again shrugged his shoulders. There was nothing more to be done.

"She is dying, monsieur, for want of strength to live."

Then Aristide went about with a great heartache. Fleurette would die; she would never see the man she loved again. What would he say when he returned and learned the tragic story? He would not even know that Aristide, loving her, had been loyal to him. When the Director of the Agence Pujol personally conducted the clients of the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse to the Grand Trianon and pointed out the bed of the Empress Josephine he nearly broke down.

"What is the Empress doing now?"

What was Fleurette doing now? Going to join the Empress in the world of shadows.

The tourists talked after the manner of their kind.

"She must have found the bed very hard, poor dear."

"Give me an iron bedstead and a good old spring mattress."

"Ah, but, my dear sir, you forget. The Empress's bed was slung on the back of tame panthers which Napoleon brought from Egypt."

It was hard to jest convincingly to the knickerbockered with death in one's soul.

"Most belovèd little Flower," ran the last letter that Fleurette received, "I have just had a cable from Aristide saying that you are very ill. I will come to you as soon as I can. *Ces petits yeux de pervenche*—I am learning your language here, you see—haunt me day and night . . ." etcetera, etcetera.

Aristide went up to her room with a great bunch of chrysanthemums. The letter peeped from under the pillow. Fleurette was very weak. Mme. Bidoux, who, during Fleurette's illness, had allowed her greengrocery business to be personally conducted to the deuce by a youth of sixteen very much in love with the lady who sold sausages and other *charcuterie* next door, had spread out the fortune-telling cards on the bed and was prophesying mendaciously. Fleurette took the flowers and clasped them to her bosom.

"No letter for *ce cher Reginald?*"

She shook her head. "I can write no more," she whispered.

She closed her eyes. Presently she said, in a low voice:—

"Aristide—if you kiss me, I think I can go to sleep."

He bent down to kiss her forehead. A fragile arm twined itself about his neck, and he kissed her on the lips.

"She is sleeping," said Mme. Bidoux, after a while.

Aristide tiptoed out of the room.

And so died Fleurette. Aristide borrowed money from the kind-hearted Bocardon for a beautiful funeral, and Mme. Bidoux and Bocardon and a few neighbours and himself saw her laid to rest. When they got back to the Rue Saint-Honoré he told Mme. Bidoux about the letters. She wept and clasped him, weeping too, in her kind, fat old arms.

The next evening Aristide, coming back from his day's work at the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse, was confronted in the shop by Mme. Bidoux, hands on broad hips.

"*Tiens, mon petit,*" she said, without preliminary greeting. "You are an angel. I knew it. But that a man's an angel is no reason for his not being an imbecile. Read this."

She plucked a paper from her apron-pocket and thrust it into his hand. He read it, and blinked in amazement.

"Where did you get this, Mère Bidoux?"

"Where I got many more. In your

drawer. The letters you were saving for that infamous scoundrel. I wanted to know what she had written to him."

"Mère Bidoux!" cried Aristide. "Those letters were sacred!"

"Bah!" said Mme. Bidoux, unabashed. "There is nothing sacred to a sapper or an old grandmother who loves an imbecile. I have read the letters, *et voilà, et voilà, et voilà!*" And she emptied her pockets of all the letters, minus the envelopes, that Fleurette had written.

"HE READ IT, AND BLINKED IN AMAZEMENT."

And, after one swift glance at the first letter, Aristide had no compunction in reading. They were all addressed to himself.

They were very short, ill-written in a poor little uncultivated hand. But they all contained one message, that of her love for Aristide. Whatever illusions she may have had concerning Batterby had soon vanished. She knew, with the unerring instinct of woman, that he had betrayed and deserted her. Aristide's pious fraud had never deceived her for a second. Too gentle, too timid to let him know what was in her heart, she had written the secret patiently week after week, hoping every time that curiosity, or pity, or something she knew not what, would induce him to open the idle letter, and wondering in her simple peasant's soul at the delicacy that caused him to refrain. Once she had boldly given him the envelope unclosed.

"She died for want of love, *parbleu*," said Aristide, "and there was mine quivering in my heart and trembling on my lips all the time. . . . She had *des yeux de pervenche*. Ah! *nom d'un chien!* It is only with me that Providence plays such tricks."

He walked to the window and looked out into the grey street. Presently I heard him murmuring the words of the old French song:—

Elle est morte en février;
Pauvre Colinette!

Modern Japanese Humour.

NO people exists among whom a sense of humour is developed to a greater extent than it is among the Japanese; and there is certainly no type of humour so difficult for a foreigner to understand as the Japanese. At root, of course, it is of the same nature as the humour of all the world; but the unique character and genius of the language, the peculiar traditions and habit of thought of the people, grown up through so many centuries apart from contact with the outer world, contribute to make the point of a Japanese joke a puzzle to the outsider. The most brilliant flash of fun is apt to need laborious explanation; and the moment one begins to explain a joke the fun vanishes, while by the end of an elaborate exposition it becomes a bore and a stupid weariness.

In Europe the pun is, as a rule, a poor form of wit, though, of course, everybody can quote bright exceptions. In Japan the play of words—a thing in the Japanese language far too subtle and significant to be called a pun—not only makes for wit and humour, but carries subtleties of poetic meaning unknown in other tongues. No translation can even make intelligible the full significance of a Japanese poem; there is an interplay of meanings and a use of words involving literary allusion and association that utterly defy reproduction; and a mere verselet of a few lines will carry more curiously and beautifully interwoven meaning than is to be compressed into a European poem four times as long. So that the mere straightforward translation of a Japanese poem is the baldest and most inadequate of all translations—the translation of the poem lately written by the Emperor of Japan on the Coronation of His Majesty the King is a case in point. This being the case when the play of meanings has a serious significance, it is quite obvious that when the significance is humorous any translation is similarly hopeless.

For this reason it is inevitable that a vast deal of Japanese humour must remain for ever a sealed book to the foreigner unacquainted with Japanese language and literature. But there is a great deal more which is as readily comprehensible to a foreigner as that of his own countrymen. We may take a short glance at one of the popular Japanese comic papers of the present day—the one more easily comprehensible by Europeans. For, in fact, there are two Japanese comic papers, both very popular—the *Kokkei Shimbun*, wholly and entirely Japanese in character, and the *Tokyo Puck*, which, as its name suggests, has a largely Europeanized outlook. The *Kokkei Shimbun* we must set aside for the moment, for its fun is so completely Japanese that explanations would be tedious and cause it to evaporate entirely. As a small instance, it may be mentioned that many Japanese written characters are compounded of two or more others, each having a wholly different meaning; and a great deal of shrewd fun arises and many sharp hits at current events are made out of the associations of these incongruous meanings—all plainly lost on a foreigner ignorant of the written characters. Even in the *Tokyo Puck*, some recent illustrations from which we reproduce, the best of the fun is apt to lie in the purely native jokes and in political and local allusions

Fig. 1.—Prince Yamagata's anger at the attacks in the "Tokyo Puck."

little understood on this side of the world. So we must do the best we can with what is reasonably intelligible.

Speaking of political allusions, by the by, the *Tokyo Puck* permits itself a deal of licence in attacking public men. In March of this year, for instance, it came out with a whole number devoted to a collection of gibes and jeers at Field-Marshal Prince Yamagata, a very distinguished soldier and statesman, whose public career began in the wars of the revolution nearly fifty years ago. We reproduce a single sketch of one set of half-a-dozen depicting respectively Prince Yamagata's Joy, Astonishment, Embarrassment, Fear, Sorrow, and Anger at different periods in his career, the sketch reproduced (Fig. 1) representing his Anger —on perusing the issue of the *Tokyo Puck* containing it.

But such a number of the *Tokyo Puck* is rare, though political allusions in plenty sprinkle the pages of its more usual issues. Leaving such matters aside for the moment, however, we will glance at random through a few recent issues. Here, for instance, in the number succeeding that devoted to Prince Yamagata, is a set of four sketches of a lazy man, of which we reproduce one. The lazy man is depicted, first, washing himself with a few drops of water poured into his hand from a tea-kettle; next, mending his torn clothes with toothpicks; then, gathering his news without the trouble of reading by sitting on his bed and listening at a chink in his neighbour's wall; and lastly, on a national holiday, hanging out the flag which every Japanese proudly displays on such occasions from the bed on which he lies supine (Fig. 2). The bed, as will be observed, is that of wadded quilts, which is spread on the floor of any available room and is the Japanese substitute for all our elaboration of bedsteads and hangings.

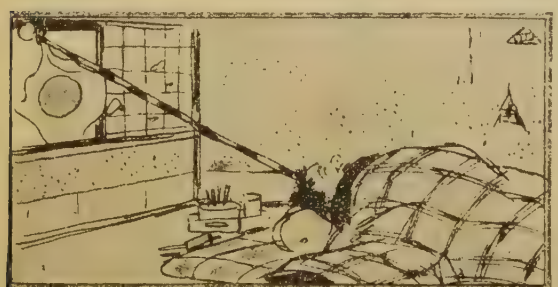


Fig. 2.—The lazy man puts out his flag on a national holiday.

Fig. 3.—Modern dress throws strange shadows.

Two numbers earlier we have a self-explanatory sketch in ridicule of the uncompromisingly European additions which many Japanese now make to their national dress. Here the cloth caps and high-collared coats of two men help to throw unmistakably feminine shadows on a neighbouring wall (Fig. 3).

In the same number a series of half-a-dozen little sketches satirizes the doll-like ideals and characteristics of the ordinary Japanese *geisha*, or singing-girl (Fig. 4). The first sketch shows a quarrel between the *hina*—the most doll-like and conventional of all dolls, who occupy the place of honour at the girls' festival on the third day of the third month. The lady *hina*—an armless and rigid bundle of the most elementary form—decides, in the second sketch, to leave her consort, and become a *geisha*. It must be remembered, by the way, that the sketches stand in Japanese order—that is, they begin at the top right-hand corner and follow downward and to the left, as the numbers indicate. She goes (3) to a hairdresser and has her hair done in the very latest style. Next (4) she decks herself in the most elegant clothes, and (5) applies for an engagement to an impresario of *geisha*. "Oh, no, no," says the manager, "you are not doll-like enough!" "But I *am* a doll!" protests the astonished *hina*. "Yes, I

Fig. 4.—The doll which was not doll-like enough for a "geisha."

know," is the final reply; "but a *geisha* must be much more like a doll than that!"

The political cartoons, as we have hinted, are not always intelligible to the ordinary foreigner; but the front page of the number containing the story of the doll who wished to be a *geisha* is filled with one which is easy to understand, and therefore may be presented as a type. This year the Civil List of the Emperor of Japan was increased by a large amount, and His Majesty has signalized the event by devoting the whole of the first year's increase to charity. In the cartoon (Fig. 5) we see the weight of the Imperial example, symbolized by an enormous bag of gold, so pressing upon the backs of certain high officials and millionaires as to cause them to sweat copious gold, which distils into a graduated bottle standing below before the hungry eyes of many *bimbo-nin*, or poor people. Portraits are to be recognized among the figures of the perspirers—notably those of the Prime Minister, Marquess Katsura, and Prince Yamagata—whose title, it must be remembered, denotes no Imperial relationship, but is equivalent merely to that of a duke in this country.

The idea of fitting the clock to human requirements is not the monopoly of our Daylight-Saving Bill promoters, as the next illustration (Fig. 6) makes clear. It comes from the same number as the following somewhat riotously-drawn sketch, in which the family discipline of human-kind is unfavourably contrasted with that of the supposed inferior animals (Fig. 7).

It will be noticed that in common with other features of the paper the illustrations of the *Tokyo Puck* are semi-Europeanized—indeed, rather more than semi-Europeanized, though the originals are still mainly drawn by the brush in the Japanese manner. But the old styles of Japanese art do not lend themselves to modern methods of quick reproduction, and with the adoption of European mechanism in this department the work of the artists has become modified

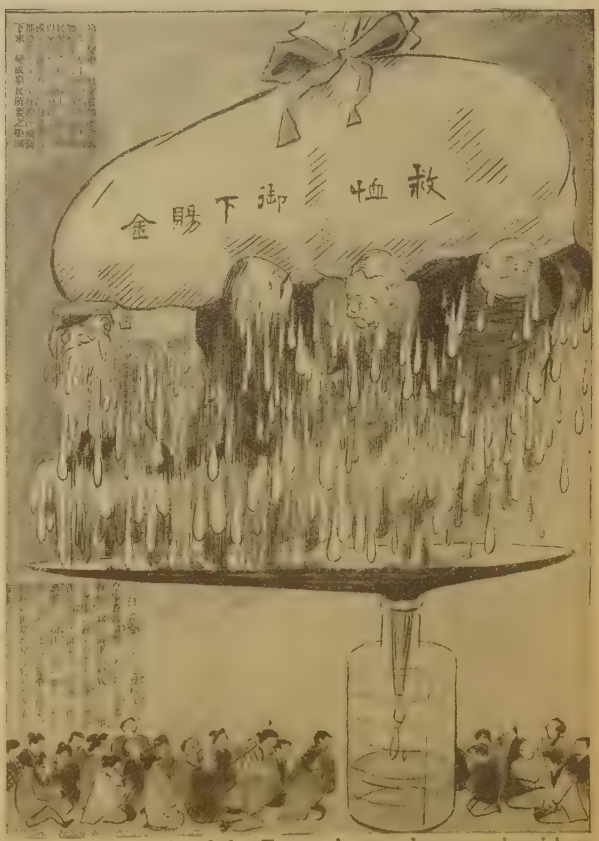


Fig. 5.—The weight of the Emperor's example causes the rich to sweat gold.

Fig. 6.—Mistress: "Why do you stop the clock at five, O-Sun?" Servant: "Well, ma'am, you tell me to get up at five, but somehow when I do get up I find the clock ahead of me. But it will be all right now."

accordingly. So that for distinctively native pictorial humour we must go back to the old artists—to Itcho of the seventeenth century, to Sukoku of the eighteenth, to Hokusai of the early nineteenth, and, at the very latest, to Kyosai, who died in 1889. The *Kokkei Shimbun* keeps perhaps a trifle closer to the old methods than the *Tokyo Puck*, and, indeed, sometimes gets some very good fun out of burlesque pictures suggesting how modern subjects might have been treated by the ancient painters—another field of humour closed to the foreigner unacquainted with the works of the old Japanese masters. But the new European methods *are* new, and the Japanese genius will no doubt so adapt itself in reasonable course of time that we shall find a more distinctively Japanese note even in modern process-blocks. Meanwhile drawings of a very clearly Japanese character are not wholly wanting, as we may see from the very quaint and ingenious advertisement which we reproduce from the *Tokyo Puck*.

There is a certain design which one finds constantly repeated in Japanese ornament—that called the *mitsu-tomoyé*—a circle filled by three comma-shaped figures with their heads toward the centre and their tails turning off symmetrically into the circumference of the ring. More than the whole space of this article might be filled with an interesting discussion on the meaning and origin of this ancient symbol, a triune figure which some consider to be derived from a sun-myth, others take for a collocation of the ancient jewels called magatama, which others again relate to the three legs that are the arms (no pun) of the Isle of Man, and which has many other suggested explanations. The symbol forms a part of many Japanese crests.

Fig. 7.—The Old Hen: "Man at the head of creation? Pooh! Look at that woman, who can't keep three children in order, and see me manage thirty!"

Fig. 8.—A quaint advertisement of lager beer.

is held generally to have a propitious significance, and is often varied and designed with all sorts of fanciful modifications and adaptations.

Here is one of the variations of the mystic figure, adapted to the advertisement of lager beer! (Fig. 8). For you must know that recently three Japanese firms of lager-beer brewers amalgamated, and this is their announcement. We look from above on a round table, about which sit the three brewers, clinking their beer-mugs fraternally in the centre. Each figure is the precise replica of the others, and the propitious sign of the *mitsu-tomoyé* is formed by the uncovered spaces of the table enclosed by the sprawled and bent arms of the partners. Not only an ingenious and quaint advertisement, but one with a meaning of its own. And it is certainly effective; for who could turn the page without stopping to glance at this eccentric design? It is in colours, of course; the greater number of illustrations in the *Tokyo Puck* are in colour, though it is scarcely the colour of the old Japanese prints!

A sketch with some interest for us (not an advertisement this time) is one depicting Admiral Togo turning away frowningly from a polite impresario who begs his attendance to view the Minatogawa dance at Kobé, and contrasting this with the hero's delight at a theatrical entertainment in England (Fig. 9). It must be remembered that the ancient prejudice of the military caste against attendance at stage performances is not yet wholly extinct in Japan, though doubtless the gallant Admiral understands well enough that in Rome one does as do the Romans.

One may gain some slight idea of the curious structure of the Japanese language, and of the way in which it lends itself to play of words, from a series of sketches (not reproduced here) with legends telling us that in Parliament the Government gives *sensei* of constructive legislation; next, that when the Session is over, the people bewail the *sensei* of that same Government; while the Prime Minister, *sensei* of political craft, has managed to get through the Session without difficulty, though such is his tyranny in the House that he may soon be expected to put members under *sensei*, with a military guard. The word *sensei* in these succeeding sentences carrying the respective meanings of, first, a pledge; second, despotism; third, a past master; and, fourth, martial law. Still more meanings expressed by the same sound are revealed in an illustrated anecdote in another part of the paper, where a doctor (*sensei*) is sent for to attend a lunatic, and, by error of the messenger, a professor (*sensei*) of jiu-jitsu appears, flings the unfortunate man down, and quells him utterly.

Events in China are glanced at occasionally,

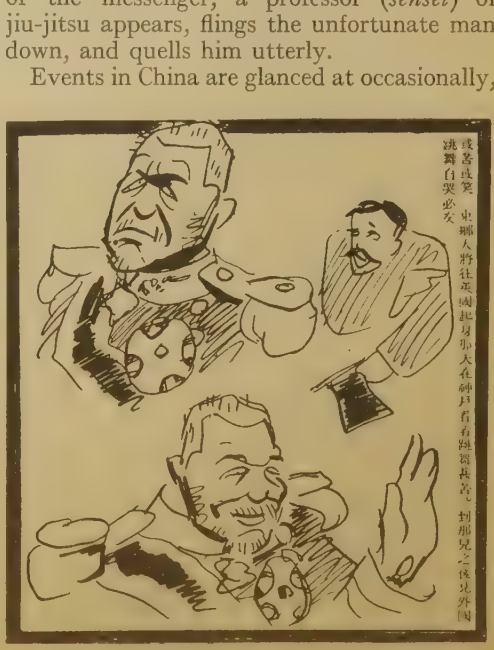


Fig. 9.—Togo in Japan and Togo in England.

Fig. 10.—A Chinese god nonplussed.

as we may see from the six sketches depicting the puzzledom of the god Kwan-ti in recent circumstances (Fig. 10). It was rumoured that the old Chinese costume was to be abolished, and European clothes substituted; whereupon the pawnbrokers (1), who had large stocks of the ancient clothes on hand, prayed to Kwan-ti to defeat the proposal; while the tailors (2), who practised the European styles—not very well, it would seem—prayed that the proposal might be adopted. Very naturally poor Kwan-ti (3) was sadly puzzled what to do. He left his temple (4), and strolled off to consult K'ung Ming, a wise sage of ancient days (5), who provided him with a copy of the usual notice hung out by tradesmen in the East announcing that business is suspended during vacation, and advised him to hang it on his temple (6) and take a holiday till the question settled itself!

Last, we reproduce another half-dozen small sketches, illustrating the discomfiture of a quack hypnotist (Fig. 11). A patient arrives (1), on whom he practises and sends into a deep mesmeric sleep (2); but to his horror he finds it wholly impossible to rouse him (3, 4). The quack, in terror, rushes off to fetch a real doctor (5), and returns to find the "patient" gone, and a good many other little things gone with him (6)!

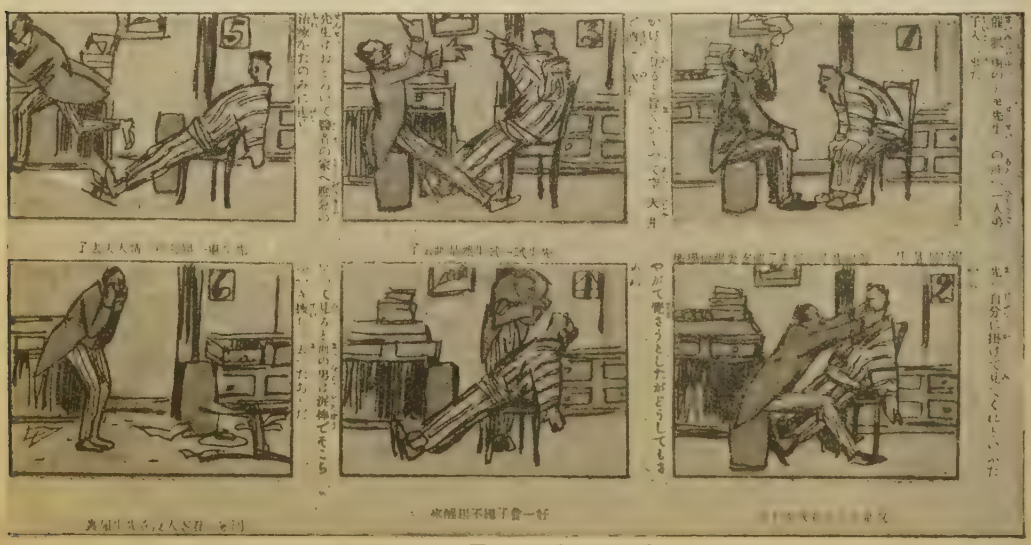


Fig. 11.—The quack quacked.

The Right Sort.

By FLORENCE WARDEN.

Illustrated by W. H. Margetson, R.I.

THE DUCHESS OF EDGBASTON was a masterful sort of woman, with a quite middle-class habit of attending to all the details of management of the vast household of her mansion in town and two splendid seats in the country.

So that when Mr. Joseph Chadwick, of the great London firm of Chadwick and Co., upholsterers and decorators, came down to the Barbicans, the splendid family seat in the Midlands, to take orders for the refurnishing of the principal apartments on the occasion of an approaching Royal visit, her Grace not only saw him herself and gave him the fullest directions, but accompanied him on foot through the grounds when he went away, to the gates where he had left his modest fly waiting.

And all the while she talked and talked, insisting on details over and over again, while he bowed and assented, and took notes, and neatly acquiesced in her marvellous judgment; although, when he was back at home with his wife, all that he remembered of the gracious conversation was that "the old woman jawed my head off."

The Duchess accompanied Mr. Chadwick even outside the gates, still reminding, still exhorting and insisting, and stood in the middle of the road, a stately figure in grey silk and priceless lace, the sheen of pearls round her neck and the flash of diamonds on her fingers giving an added touch of brilliancy to her imposing appearance.

A young groom from a neighbouring hunting stable, who was passing by the park-gates of the Barbicans as the Duchess and Mr. Chadwick came out, was struck by her regal-looking figure, and wondered whether ever a queen was more queenly than she was.

Just as this thought flashed through the young man's mind there came round the sharp curve in the road beyond the gates, without the slightest warning, a large motor-car, only just visible in a huge cloud of dust.

The young groom had his wits about him. Walking on the grass border by the side of the road in order not to approach too near the great lady, he was almost level with her and Mr. Chadwick when the car swung round the bend. He sprang into the roadway, right in front of the car, and, grabbing the two figures as best he could, dragged them out of danger.

It had to be done with lightning quickness, somehow, anyhow. There was no time for consideration or for ceremony; for in another moment both Duchess and upholsterer would have been under the front wheels of the car.

But, alas! the immediate consequences of the young man's brave act were disastrous. For when the man in charge of the wheel, realizing how narrowly a dreadful tragedy had been averted, had swung over the car to the other side of the road and stopped to look back, what he saw were the figures of three people, two men and a woman, lying in a sort of heap on the grass beside the road, and scrambling awkwardly to their feet.

As it happened, no one was at all hurt except the groom, who sustained a slight sprain of the right ankle. He was the first to get on his feet; the upholsterer, an older and heavier man, followed suit. And then, between them, they raised the Duchess from the ground.

But, oh! the groom trembled when he saw the expression of her handsome face. No gratitude for her escape from death or serious injury did he see there. All that she was conscious of was the terrible insult to her dignity which she had experienced in being dragged to the ground and tumbled in a heap by the roadside with two male things of vastly inferior consequence!

And then the injury to her personal appearance which she had suffered in that short moment! Her delicately-tinted gown was stained green by the rank, long grass. Her large white chip hat, with its veil of lace and wreath of pale roses, lay crushed in the dust at her feet. Her lovely silver hair was disordered, while the rope of pearls which she wore round her throat had burst, and the precious gems lay scattered on the road.

The groom, abashed, scarlet, muttering

hoarse apologies, and conscious, under an uneasy sense of injustice, that he had committed an unpardonable offence, was picking up the scattered pearls. Mr. Chadwick, more appalled by the accident to the Duchess's dignity, and fearful of its possible consequences to himself, than grateful for his own escape, was saying he knew not what of wiping the dust from his hat. The groom came humbly to Lord Cedric with the pearls he had picked up.

"I'm that sorry I don't know what to say, my lord," said he, as he put the gems into the young man's hand, "for having been so rough. But, my lord, if you'd ha' been here you'd ha' seen as how there wasn't no time

"HE SAW THE FIGURES OF THREE PEOPLE LYING IN A SORT OF HEAP ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD, AND SCRAMBLING AWKWARDLY TO THEIR FEET."

commonplace and foolish to the coldly irate great lady.

And in the midst of all this a fair-haired, slim young man, one of the younger sons of the Duchess, came running down the drive to find out what had happened.

The Duchess said little, but, with compressed lips and a freezing manner, she walked, erect and stately, through the open gate into the park, leaving her son, Lord Cedric, to say whatever was necessary to the young person who appeared to be looked upon as responsible for the mischief.

Mr. Chadwick stood by the door of the fly, to think. Another minute and they'd both —her Grace and the gentleman—ha' been under the wheels. You jest ask the gentleman yourself."

But Lord Cedric took his hand and shook it warmly, in spite of his reluctance.

"You saved their lives, undoubtedly," said he. "And my mother will be as grateful as I am when she has got over her shaking. You must make allowance for the shock it gave her. In the meantime you must let me——"

In an instant he had whipped a ten-pound note out of the pocket-book with which he

had been fumbling, and tried to thrust it into the young man's hand.

But the groom, turning scarlet, refused to take it.

"No, no, my lord, I couldn't think of that," he said. "I'm all right, I am. I'm in a good situation, and I don't want your money. But I thank you very much for speaking so nice about it."

Lord Cedric looked abashed in his turn. Then he laid his hand on the groom's shoulder.

"Well," he said, "I'm glad you feel like that about it. But look here. Some day you may want a friend. If you should, I want you to promise that you'll write to my mother and let her know."

"To her Grace?" cried the groom, incredulously.

"Yes. She's the best-hearted woman in the world, and she'll be a good friend to you if you should want one. But tell me your name."

"Horrocks, my lord; Jim—I should say James—Horrocks."

Lord Cedric scribbled it down.

"James Horrocks—I won't forget. Now, don't you forget either."

"I won't, my lord. And thank you very much."

Then Mr. Chadwick came up to him, before Lord Cedric was out of hearing.

"Mr. Horrocks," he said, warmly—for he had caught the name—"I can't thank you enough for risking your life as you did. You must allow me——"

And taking out of his pocket-book two ten-pound notes, he tried hard to induce the groom to take them. But it had become a point of honour with Horrocks to take no reward for what he had done; it was enough for him that Lord Cedric's kind words had restored his sense of justice and self-respect, momentarily destroyed by the Duchess's coldness and ingratitude.

Mr. Chadwick took a card from his pocket, and Horrocks knew enough of London to recognize the name of one of its most important upholstering firms.

"Remember always, Horrocks," he said, "that you have a friend in me. If ever you should be in any trouble send in that card to me. Or, better still, I'll write my private address on it, and you can come to me there. I'm only the son of one of the members of the firm, and at our business place you might not get at me so easily."

And Mr. Chadwick, who was a stout, good-looking man of middle age, very well dressed, and of kindly and good manners, shook hands with the young groom with a warmth and good-will which amply made amends for the Duchess's unkindness.

For two years Horrocks saw nothing of the two people whose lives he had saved, but at the end of that period misfortune fell upon him. He was invalided as the result of a kick from a horse, and when, after some months in hospital, he came out into the world again, he found that he had to face hard times.

He was still too lame to follow his own calling, and such casual employment as he was fit for was hard to get. Finally the day came when he sat in his little top room in a back street in the West-end of London with no breakfast to look back upon and no dinner to look forward to; and then it occurred to him that it was time to try the memories of the two people who had promised to befriend him.

He debated with whom to begin.

He knew too much of the world to reckon too securely upon either of his untried friends; but he thought the pride of a duchess was as likely to hold good as the generosity of a tradesman, so he tossed up his last remaining halfpenny, and it came down the Duchess.

So he wrote a laborious letter on a sheet of paper begged from his good-natured landlady, and, having found out her Grace's mansion in Mayfair (Lord Cedric had not thought it necessary to give him his mother's address), Jim Horrocks dropped the letter himself into the letter-box one April evening, having first ascertained by the lights in the windows that the family were at home.

Two days passed, two horrible days, but he got no answer to his letter, and then he tried Mr. Chadwick.

He called at the handsome house in Hyde Park Gardens, the address which Mr. Chadwick had written on his card, and, as luck would have it, he caught Mr. Joseph Chadwick himself coming out on the way to his motor-car, which stood at the door.

With him was a handsome lady in a beautiful dress, whom he guessed to be the upholsterer's wife. She looked keenly and suspiciously at Horrocks, and asked her husband who he was as the ex-groom, reddening very much, saluted him.

To the young man's great relief, Mr. Chadwick recognized him at once.

"Why, Horrocks, I'm very glad to see you, my lad, but you're looking thin. Been ill, eh?"

As he spoke he shook hands with him warmly, stopping short on the steps to do so.

"Yes, sir. I've been a long time in hospital. Kicked by a 'orse. I'm rather—rather down on my luck, sir, and I thought as how perhaps—you know—you told me, sir——"

"To be sure, to be sure. I'm very glad you came to me. The Duchess treated you handsomely, eh?"

The young man grew redder still.

"I wrote to her, sir, but she hasn't replied."

"Ah, that's the worst of those great folks, Horrocks. It's not altogether their fault. They get spoilt through too much adulation and all that sort of thing."

"Well, sir, I didn't expect much from her Grace. You remember how she took it," said Horrocks, with a wan smile.

Mr. Chadwick laughed and slapped him on the back.

"Well, we'll do better than that for you. Wait a minute while I speak to Mrs. Chadwick."

His wife was calling to him impatiently from the motor-car. Mr. Chadwick ran down the steps, exchanged a few words hurriedly with his wife, and came back again. Horrocks had a fancy that the lady was not inclined to be liberal, and that her view affected her husband's inclinations unfavourably. However that might be, Mr. Chadwick put his hand into his pocket, took out two half-crowns, and, pressing them into his hand, said, quickly:—

"There's something to go on with, Horrocks. I haven't much cash about me this afternoon. But you shall hear from me. We must do something for you, my lad. Wait a few days, and—you'll see."

He added these words kindly, in a low voice, and Horrocks, although he knew what bitter work "waiting" might have to be for him, thanked him warmly, and went away comforted.

But five shillings does not go far in London, and in a day or two the poor fellow felt the pinch of want again.

By this time he was getting rather angry with his "friends," and with a very sore feeling at his heart he went boldly to the Duchess's house, and, knowing that his letter had been received and read long ago, he rang the bell and, giving his name, asked to see the Duchess of Edgbaston.

The footman only looked him coldly up and down, and informed him that her Grace was "not at home."

At that very moment a handsome landau, with the family arms painted upon it in a tiny medallion, drew up to the door, and a footman came out with her Grace's bag and sunshade, while the man who had spoken to him waved him away, anxious that the Duchess should not be annoyed on her way to her carriage by the importunities of the shabby young man with the dragging leg.

Horrocks turned away with more of a sort of bitter amusement in his heart than either anger or disgust. He had not expected much from the Duchess, so to get nothing did not really surprise him very much.

Unfortunately, it did matter.

He spent a horrible evening, and on the following day started on another tramp in search of work, after peeping in at the various doors of the big establishment of Messrs. Chadwick and Co., in the hope of catching a glimpse of his friend.

In this he failed. He wandered about London, hungry and footsore, for the rest of the day, and at dusk he went back to his lodgings, where he was beginning to be looked upon rather coldly, and where, one by one, the various articles of furniture which he could possibly do without had been abstracted, to adorn the rooms of other and better-paying lodgers

He crawled slowly up the stairs and opened the door of his room, but started back and shut it again in confusion, on discovering that he had made some odd and unaccountable mistake.

In the morning he had left a bare stretch of uncarpeted floor, a small iron bedstead with insufficient bedclothes, a rickety wooden wash-stand, one broken chair, a table with three sound legs, a yard of worn linoleum, and his box.

In the glimpse he caught of the room as he opened the door and then hastily shut it again on his return home, he had seen a smart new carpet of bright colours, handsome curtains to match in each of the two windows, a brass bedstead—to use his own description—"fit for a prince," and a bedroom suite of dark green wood with copper ornaments.

There were other beautiful things in the room besides, but he had not had time to notice them. Even the things he saw were but a background in his mind to the pretty girl who was flitting about from place to place, and who uttered an exclamation of annoyance on catching sight of him.

James Horrocks stood outside the door, bewildered.

For the first moment he was inclined to fancy he must have made a mistake and got into the wrong house. But the sight of the well-remembered gap in the banisters reassured him on that head.

Then another explanation occurred to him. Weary of waiting for her rent, his long-suffering landlady had turned him out, by the simple expedient of letting his room "over his head," to the young lady whom he had just seen there.

As these thoughts passed through his mind, Horrocks was conscious of a succession of sounds from within the room, bumpings and draggings, and pattering footsteps, as of someone in a great hurry. Then, as he walked slowly to the head of the stairs with the intention of going down to question his landlady, the door behind him was flung open, and a bright, girlish voice cried :—

"Is that Mr. Horrocks?"

"Yes, miss," said he, shyly.

And the natural resentment he had not been able to repress faded before the girl's sunny smile. In her cotton dress and neat bonnet, her face flushed with exertion, her breath coming quickly, she looked, he thought, the prettiest creature he had ever seen.

She put her hand to her breast and turned up her eyes.

"Oh, I've had such a time getting your room ready!" she panted out. "And me so anxious to have it all straight before you got back!"

"M-m-m-my room!" stammered Horrocks.

She stepped back, beckoning him to come in.

"Come and see for yourself," she said, "and don't stand up, for I hear you've been ill, and you don't look much to boast of now. Sit down on that sofa, Mr. Horrocks, and look what else I've brought you."

"A BRIGHT, GIRLISH VOICE CRIED: 'IS THAT MR. HORROCKS?'"

The young man staggered in, pale and trembling, and obeyed her as if she had been a queen, sinking down on the pretty little soft chintz-covered settee that stood at the foot of the bed, in front of a table, covered with a fine white cloth and spread with tempting dishes.

There was a tongue, there was a meat-pie, there were bread, butter, fruit, jelly, and there were flowers in a vase in the middle. The pretty sorceress was smiling at his confusion.

"We didn't quite know what to bring you that you'd like to tempt you to eat," she said.

"As you'd not been well, we thought your appetite might want tickling, as it were."

He stared at her, his eyes moist in spite of himself.

"My appetite!" echoed he. "No; it don't want no tempting, miss."

Indiscreet revelations were on his tongue, but he stopped short. He did not want to hurt the feelings of the pretty goddess by mentioning such ugly things as semi-starvation to her.

"You do look ill, though," she said, gently. "If I were you, I'd lie up for a bit. Don't you be afraid that you'll have to run about looking for work any more just yet. You'll be looked after, I can tell you, better than ever you were in your life."

"But who's done it all?" asked Horrocks, in a shaking voice.

The girl put her pretty head on one side and laughed knowingly.

"Can't you guess?" said she, as she cast a merry look round.

His eyes followed the direction of hers, and there, in the farthest corner of the room, he espied the very chair, a splendid chair covered in morocco, with apparatus for adjusting it to any posture, that he had seen and admired in Mr. Chadwick's shop that morning.

"Oh!" exclaimed Horrocks, overcome by this splendid fulfilment of the upholsterer's promise. "Yes, yes, of course I know! It's Mr. Chadwick! God bless him! He said as he'd do something for me. But I never thought—no, I never dreamt of this!" And he looked round him slowly, as if half afraid the beautiful vision might all fade away together and leave him to his hard bed and his bare boards and his solitude. And then there burst from his lips, almost without his knowledge, the indictment which had been burning within him. "And to think of his going and doing all this, when that there Duchess wouldn't even see me or answer my letter!"

The girl stared at him.

"The Duchess?" cried she.

He told her his story, simply, tersely, jerking out short sentences, afraid to trust himself to long ones. She listened with deep attention, meanwhile helping him to slices of this and that and encouraging him to eat as he talked. But she made no comment or interruption, and when he had finished she only remarked, somewhat cryptically, that it was "the way of the world."

Horrocks watched her with open admiration while she made him some tea with a kettle and spirit-lamp which she had brought with her.

A question was trembling on his tongue, but he scarcely dared to frame it. He wanted to ask her who she was, although he guessed that she was one of the smart maids of Mr. Chadwick's establishment. At the same time, it was an odd sort of tantalizing pleasure to be waited upon, to be coaxed, to be comforted, by a charming girl whose name he did not even know.

At last she said: "Well, now I must be going; for we've got a reception on to-night, and I shall be wanted early. But I shall come back again to-morrow to see if there's anything I can do for you, and whether you're getting on all right."

He rose to his feet, shaking so that he was scarcely steady on them.

"Won't you tell me who you are?" he asked, hoarsely, timidly, at last.

"Oh, I'm Fairy Do-as-she's-bid," laughed the girl, in whose eyes there was a kindness, a sort of motherliness, that the man who had been hungry and lonely and heart-sore for so long appreciated to the full.

"Well, will you tell Mr. Chadwick——" He stopped, unable to go on. Then he began again. "Will you tell him——"

"Tell him what?" asked the girl, softly.

But Horrocks could not go on. He broke down suddenly, and, sinking on the settee again, burst into tears.

He felt a warm, light hand on his shoulder.

"Don't you give way, Mr. Horrocks. Your troubles are about over now, I think. Good-bye—good-bye."

By the second utterance of the word she was at the door, and in another moment she was gone.

Horrocks stared at the place where he had last seen her, as if he could still conjure up her pretty face and figure by thoughts of her. He was worn out with delight, with the strain of the sudden revulsion of feeling he had gone through. And when the landlady came up to tell him that his rent had been paid "by Miss Frensham, the young lady as brought the things," and when he further discovered that his fairy had left behind her under a plate on the table a purse containing twenty-five sovereigns and a plain envelope with his name on it, he felt dizzily that he was no longer a prosaic human being; he was living through an Arabian Night full of colour and gorgeousness.

Next day he went to Mr. Chadwick's shop, but his kind friend would not be thanked; he sent out a message that he was "engaged."

However, Horrocks was not to be baulked of his expressions of gratitude; he wrote a letter, too full of feeling to be strictly grammatical, and posted it to Mr. Chadwick at his private address.

And, with his head full of new dreams, he began again to look for work.

What would one have to make in weekly wages in order to be able to keep as wife a lovely girl like Miss Frensham as she ought to be kept? That was the question which was already agitating his mind; and, although the splendid kindness he had received had given him such an impulse towards health and strength that he scarcely limped now in his search for work, James Horrocks took care, when tea-time drew near, and with it the hope that the fairy would visit him again, to be quite close to his sofa, so that he might look enough of an invalid in case she should come to see him.

She did come. She made joyous comments upon her own indiscretion in visiting a gay bachelor unattended; but it was plain that she felt no qualms, that she was not only able to take care of herself, but in no fear of her charge.

And as she flitted about and chatted to him, and spread out on the table the various delicacies which she had brought to tempt the invalid's appetite, James Horrocks's calculations as to the cost of keeping a wife —such a wife!—went on in his head in a running undercurrent.

There was only one woman in the world for him; he had made up his mind to that already.

She came again and again, always sweet and kind and bright; and James Horrocks had to pretend to be weak and sickly long after he was so far recovered as to have got a situation as coachman.

Then at once he began cautiously to feel his way, insinuating that Miss Frensham had sweethearts, throwing out hints as to his pressing desire to get "settled," and all the while not daring to say or even to look too much.

Yet somehow he fancied, when he was thinking over her visits after her departure, that she was not quite so innocent as she wished to appear, and that she was not indisposed to look favourably upon him.

He was beginning to feel reluctantly enough that it would be impossible to keep up the farce of invalidism much longer when one afternoon, as he reached his lodgings, he saw a carriage he knew standing at the door. He threw one glance towards the occupant of the landau, and recognized the Duchess.

Stately as of old, she was exquisitely dressed, her silver hair looking splendid under a big black hat, her figure erect, her expression reserved as ever. Horrocks saluted her coldly, and would have passed into the house, but that she sent the footman after him to call him to her.

He stood by the side of the carriage, grave, stiff, almost fierce. It was all very well to make a pretence of inquiring for him now that he wanted help no longer; but how about those days when he might have starved?

"I'm glad to see that you are looking so well, Horrocks," she began, in her dignified tones. "I was sorry to hear that you had been so unlucky and so ill."

"Thank you, your Grace. I am quite well now, thanks to kind friends who remembered me in my troubles," said he, stiffly.

Proud as she was, he might have his pride too—now.

"I'm delighted to see that you appear to have got over them. You have got a situation?"

"I'm going into it to-morrow, your Grace."

"And you are quite comfortable?"

"Quite, your Grace." And he added, with a burst of pride: "I'm going to be married soon, I hope."

To his utter astonishment and consternation, a sort of wail broke plaintively from the Duchess's lips.

"Oh, you're not going to take my Frensham from me, are you?"

Horrocks turned quite white. His head seemed to be spinning round.

"Y-y-y-your Frensham, your Grace!" stammered he.

A real smile hovered for an instant on the Duchess's dignified lips.

"Yes, my Frensham. The dear girl's been with me two years, and I never had such a maid before. It will be very hard if you take her away from me, Horrocks."

The young man stared at the Duchess in mingled confusion and horror. What was this that he had done? What was the ghastly mistake that he had made? He tried to speak, but the words only came in sections, hoarse, almost meaningless.

"*Your*—maid! N-n-not Mr. Chadwick's! Oh, Lord!"

The Duchess took pity upon him, and leaned forward with a kindly smile on her face.

"You thought worse of me than was quite fair, I believe, Horrocks. I didn't get your letter at once, as I was not back from the Riviera. The footman didn't know your name, or you would have been admitted

"THE YOUNG MAN STARED AT THE DUCHESS IN MINGLED CONFUSION AND HORROR."

when you called. When Frensham told me what unkind things you said of me and what a mistake you had made, she held her tongue until she had seen me, and we decided to keep up the little joke. I am very glad you liked the things I sent. And I am most happy to see you looking so well. You won't think hard things of me again, will you?"

She held out her hand graciously, and Horrocks touched it with the feeling that he was in a dream. Still holding his hand in hers for a moment, the Duchess bent forward once more to say:—

"And if you do persuade Frensham to marry you—why, the Duke and I will contrive to find something very, very nice as a wedding present!"

"God bless your Grace, and f-forgive me for all the mistakes I've made," stammered out Horrocks, as he stood back and held his hat in his hand as she drove away.

It was a funny world! But surely the very funniest thing of all in it was to find that the genial upholsterer had played him false, and that it was the Duchess, whom he had offended so deeply, who had turned out to be the right sort after all!

What Reform is Most Needed?

A Symposium of Eminent Men and Women.

NOT long ago at a political meeting someone in the audience asked a well-known politician what he would do if he were given absolute power. His reply was: "I would put an extra loaf in every poor man's bread-basket every morning." But this did not meet the approval of at least one of his hearers, who jumped to his feet and exclaimed, "Well, as for me, I would provide a job of work for every man that has not got it." All this is, of course, only a variation of Mr. Jesse Collings's wish of forty years ago—"If I were an absolute despot, I would see that every man in the kingdom had three acres of land, a cottage, and a cow."

What would *you* do if *you* were King with unlimited power? Not power to frame a measure and introduce it into the House of Commons, and argue it to the assembled legislators and modify it clause by clause in Committee, and finally see it, maimed and disfigured, qualified out of all recognition, placed obscurely on the Statute-book; but power of a kind to effect it instantly and carry it to-morrow into execution.

What is your idea of an urgent special reform? What is it that Englishmen demand at once to make them happy? What is the most crying abuse of the age? Readers of newspapers in general become so confused with the various agitations brought daily to their notice that they are unable to estimate their relative importance. THE STRAND MAGAZINE recently addressed a number of representative public men, putting to them this question: "Of all the pressing reforms of this present reign of His Majesty George V., what single one would you choose for instant consummation if you were given the power, and why would you choose it?"

The field of selection is a wide one. The world is full of pain, suffering, hunger, and hardships; crime and disease meet the eye of every man as he walks abroad. Cannot the reader see the eager look on the faces of millions of unfortunate beings bent upon the figure of the man who, crowned with supreme power, could, by a gesture of his hand, turn their woes into happiness?

Alas, it may be said at the outset the suffering millions would expect too much. As one distinguished statesman, who begs that his name may not be quoted, writes: "The reform must be practical before all things, and the passage of any single measure such as you suggest would probably make very little difference to the lives of the people." A hundred might spread over a score of years, but not a single one.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie.

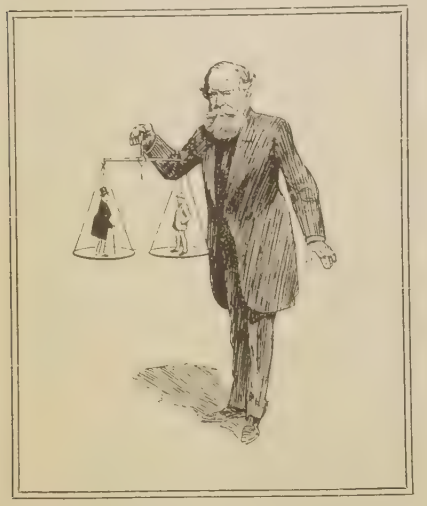
"What do I think the greatest reform of the present day?" asks Mr. Andrew Carnegie. "What single act would I select for instant consummation if I had the power? I would enact the abolition of war. I would abolish war between nations, which belies our claims to civilization. As long as men kill each other they are savages." Think of what a tremendous act this would be, and of what far-reaching significance. A decree would be signed disbanding the British Army, dismanning the Navy, and putting ships, guns, and weapons on a scrap-heap. It is certainly

MR. ANDREW CARNEGIE WOULD BRING ABOUT DISARMAMENT AND ABOLISH WAR.

difficult to conceive of a more sweeping reform than this, but if it were brought about by a stroke of the pen it would probably throw a million men into idleness, and disorganize irreparably the whole machinery of civilization.

Lord Avebury.

Far more modest would be the exercise



LORD AVEBURY WOULD BRING ABOUT PROPORTIONATE REPRESENTATION.

of Lord Avebury's power in his capacity of omnipotent despot. He would merely adjust the rights of the British voter. "I would pass a measure of proportional representation, which would secure not a merely elective, but a really representative House of Commons, and would prevent measures being passed to which the majority of the electors are opposed."

Dr. Andrew Wilson.

"I suppose," writes Dr. Andrew Wilson, "the real attitude of anyone who seeks to reply to the question asked would be that of the man who says, 'If I were King!' We move very slowly in the matter of reforms, and even reasonable souls grow impatient when they see much-needed measures either rejected or hindered in their course of being placed on the Statute-book. There may be a great occasional gain in the work of an amiable despot, who, seeing an injustice or a great need on the part of his people, can remedy things by a stroke of his pen. For my part, I have longed for years—and I have said so in my lectures and declared this opinion in my writings—to be able to say that a great health measure should be passed, whereby every boy and girl would be taught the laws and practice of health-science before leaving school. In this way we should prepare each generation to play its part in the prevention of disease and in the prolongation and betterment of life. We should bend the educational twig, and thus incline the proper growth of the adult tree. If a sturdy, robust nation is to be desired, then we must begin with the children, and, repressing a vast deal of useless subjects at present taught, make way for instruction in health laws. Such a measure, among other benefits conferred, would fit the future mothers for the proper feeding and upbringing of infants, and save a tremendous mortality among the young. *Salus populi suprema lex.* This is an excellent all-round motto; and the first line of national safety and success is that of making the people healthy from birth. Such a law I would pass to-morrow 'if I were King!'"

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

If Sir Arthur Conan Doyle were given supreme power, a power as great as both Houses of Parliament, for a single day, he

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE WOULD ALTER THE DIVORCE LAWS.

would exercise it in the direction of the reform of the divorce laws. "The divorce laws,' he writes, "are so arranged at present that divorce is practically impossible for a poor man, that people are tied without hope of release to lunatics, drunkards, and criminals, and great numbers (more than two hundred thousand individuals) are separated by law, and yet are not free to marry again—a fact which cannot be conducive to public morality."

Mr. Eustace Miles.

"You ask what single public measure I would chose if I had the power. It would be," writes Mr. Eustace Miles, "the sensible education of children in respect of health

MR. EUSTACE MILES WOULD TRAIN CHILDREN TO BE STRONG AND HEALTHY.

and play. This would include simple and practical teaching about deep and full breathing through the nostrils, cleanliness (in the widest sense of the word), food values, cookery, etc." In other words, Mr. Miles would make a law by which every child in the kingdom should be made to practise hygiene. One can imagine at our public schools that the following colloquy between master and pupil would take place: "Have you finished your breathing lesson, Thompson? If not, you can double your course of Plasmon analysis after school hours"; or twenty minutes' extra handkerchief practice would be a prescribed punishment. This measure would unquestionably bring about a great change in the health as well as in the scholastic curriculum of the British nation.

Mrs. Pankhurst.

Although popularly associated with one single agitation, Mrs. Pankhurst has spent a lifetime in considering social reforms, and she is convinced that the one most urgent reform of the age is female suffrage. If she were omnipotent enough to pass this measure, she would not be obliged to give any reasons for it, but she does so now beforehand as follows: "(1) It is unjust, injurious, and intolerable that sex should be a disqualification for citizenship; (2) Women need the means by which reforms in the interest of their sex can be constitutionally obtained; and (3) The nation suffers as a whole by being deprived of the responsible help of women in legislation."

Mr. Israel Zangwill.

Place a crown on Mr. Israel Zangwill's head and put a sceptre in his hand, and would he decree the instant return of the Jews to prosperous Palestine? Would he bring health and wealth to the denizens of the Ghetto? Not at all. "The public measure

MR. ISRAEL ZANGWILL WOULD GIVE VOTES TO WOMEN.

he writes, "which I would select as being most urgently needed is female suffrage, for the very simple reason that it concerns half humanity."

Mr. Justin McCarthy.

Naturally Mr. Justin McCarthy has no doubt whatever as to the one great desideratum of the age, because if it were brought about it would react not only upon the one country immediately concerned, but upon England and, indeed, upon the whole civilized world. "I can have no hesitation whatever in saying that if it were in my power to lend prompt and effective help to the passing of any public measure in these countries, it should be to the passing of the Home Rule policy to confer self-government on my native and ever-loved country, Ireland. I do so because of my conviction that by the means of self-government, and by that means only, can Ireland ever be restored to national prosperity, progress, and self-respect. Other measures of reform may bring increased and increasing

prosperity to other branches of national interest, comfort and happiness in England, Scotland, and Wales; but I do not know,

MR. JUSTIN McCARTHY WOULD GRANT HOME RULE TO IRELAND.

and cannot at present conceive, of any single measure which could bring such promise of restored prosperity and happiness as Home Rule must bring to Ireland."

Sir Felix Schuster.

Sir Felix Schuster is a big financier and one of the great powers of the City. One wonders what such an eminent man would

SIR FELIX SCHUSTER WOULD HAVE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION AT ONCE.

do for a single day if he were given the right to stamp his will upon the Statute-book. He, too, has elicited our surprise. He would not acquit himself of anything extravagant, he would not double any man's pay, he would not empty the jails or the workhouses, he would not establish a national theatre or give free dinners to the workless; Sir Felix would merely sign his name to a decree adjusting the voting system of the male part of the community. "What would I do? I would pass proportional representation. It is generally admitted that the House of Commons as at present constituted does not correctly represent the opinions of the electorate, and if the Second Chamber is to be endowed with greater legislative authority it is all the more important that the will of the people should be faithfully reflected in its majorities."

Sir William Bull, M.P.

"I consider the most important reform of the age," writes Sir William Bull, M.P., "is that we should follow the example of Joseph

SIR WILLIAM BULL, M.P., WOULD INSTANTLY ESTABLISH NATIONAL RESERVES OF CORN—"LIKE JOSEPH IN EGYPT."

in Egypt by maintaining a permanent food reserve within the British Isles. I select this specific measure because I am convinced that under the terms of the Declaration of London, to which the representatives of the Radical Government, in theory the trustees for the security and welfare of the British Empire, have affixed their seals, the food supply of the British Isles will be greatly imperilled in time of war. When the general public knows that at least eighty per cent. of the breadstuffs and fifty-five per cent. of the meat consumed in these islands is imported, and that at times there is barely a six-weeks' supply of food in Great Britain, then it will realize as I do the gravity of the situation,

which, in my opinion, has been needlessly aggravated by the frenzied party spirit in which the Declaration of London, a national and not a party question, has been rushed through Parliament in the teeth of overwhelming and unanswerable argument to the effect that the said Declaration gravely endangered the food supply of the country in time of war—or, as Mr. Balfour put it, introduced the problem of starvation rather than invasion."

Mr. W. J. Locke.

The politicians at St. Stephen's might well tremble if Mr. W. J. Locke were for a single hour made the autocrat of Great Britain and Ireland. "What would I do if I had the power to pass only one single measure? I

MR. W. J. LOCKE WOULD ABOLISH THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

would abolish the House of Commons." It is not necessary for the great novelist to give any reasons for this drastic action, but he does. "The reason is obvious to the dullest member of the House of Lords."

Lady Constance Lytton.

To Lady Constance Lytton, as to others, there is only one crying need of the age, and that is the "recognition of women as human beings." If the forty-eight millions of people in these islands would only give Lady Constance the right to enact one measure for their benefit, the fair sex might give an instant order for several thousand, not bonnet-boxes, but *ballot*-boxes. "I consider," she writes, "the reform most urgently needed is the recognition of women as human beings, equal though not similar to men, and for the reason that artificial restrictions imposed upon one half of the race result in harm to both men and women, and injure the development of future generations. In England the immediate next step towards this reform is the removal of sex-disability with regard to the Parliamentary vote, voting rights being the very foundation of government and of national well-being in the estimation of the British race. Moreover, in matters of government England sets the pace to the civilized world. The public measure, therefore, which I should select for instant consummation, as containing the seed of the most widely influential benefit, would be a political measure for ending the present total exclusion of women from the Parliamentary franchise, in whatever form is best adapted to receive the majority-consent of the present electorate, as expressed by their representatives in Parliament."

Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P.

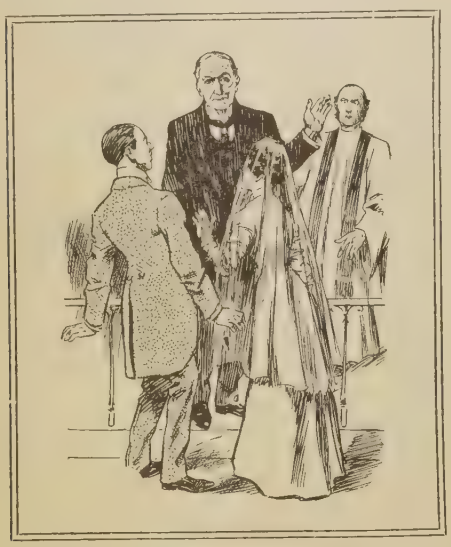
Another politician is Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P., whose works testify to his sympathy and his imagination. What would he do if he were a king of the old stamp? He does not hesitate to tell us. Differing from Mr.

SIR GILBERT PARKER WOULD TEACH EVERY BOY TO BEAR ARMS.

Carnegie, who would have every man lay down his rifle for ever, the author of "The Seats of the Mighty" would put a rifle into the hands of every boy. "If I had the power, I would enact National Service," he writes; "that is, the training of every boy before he enters upon the battle of life, or at the beginning of that battle, to bear arms in defence of his country, with its consequent physical and moral advantages."

Mr. Chichele Plowden.

But suppose it was not the politician, but the justiciar, who was crowned with supreme authority, such a one, for example, as Mr. Chichele Plowden. Mr. Plowden does not hesitate, but he would seize a pen and, by a single stroke, reform our marriage laws. "There is," he writes, "no social need at the present time more pressing than a reform of



MR. CHICHELE PLOWDEN WOULD REGULATE THE MARRIAGE SYSTEM.

our marriage laws. I select marriage because more than any other institution it affects the happiness, the health, and the morals of the community—at least, so it seems to me."

Mr. G. K. Chesterton.

The reform which appeals most to Mr. G. K. Chesterton is that of the present imperfect law of libel. "There are hundreds of huge abuses that other people want to pull down, but whenever we try to do it we find it involves saying that the powerful Perkins has done wrong, or that the wealthy Wilkins is really responsible. The very creators and sustainers of the abuse can always purchase the best power of the Bar, and can generally appeal to a social prejudice on the Bench. But the cleverest barrister or the stupidest judge would not go against the law if the law were clear. It is because the law of libel is hopelessly confused that all public-spirited criticism has practically become impossible. You dare not put the biggest offender in the dock for corruption or tyranny, for fear he should put you in the dock for libel. In short, I have come back to the old unanswerable truism that a nation will have nothing else if it does not have liberty."

MR. G. K. CHESTERTON WOULD REVISE THE LAW OF LIBEL.

Mr. William Willett.

And, lastly, there is much of sweet reasonableness in the argument of Mr. William Willett, the promoter of the "Daylight Saving Bill," who only asks that he may be made an irresistible autocrat for an hour in order that he may bestow the boon of light upon the people. "More light," would cry this benevolent reformer. "My reasons are—Light is one of the greatest gifts of the Creator to man. While daylight surrounds us, cheerfulness reigns, anxieties press less heavily, and courage is bred for the struggle of life. Against our ever-besieging enemy, disease, light and fresh air act as guards in our defence and, when the conflict is close, supply us with the most effective weapons with which to overcome the invader. For women, inhaling contaminated air and dust, it is a great misfortune that even on the longest day in summer they now have such a short period of leisure before sunset. There are over four million occupied females in England and Wales on whom the effect of one hour more of sunlight daily for one hundred and fifty-four days must lead to an improvement in health. Then among the financial results of the Bill will be a saving to the nation of at least two million five hundred thousand pounds a year (enough to pay the interest on the cost of forty *Dreadnoughts*) and an appreciation of railway, tramway, and omnibus stocks by several millions of pounds sterling."

Helping Freddie.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by H. M. Brock, R.I.

I DON'T want to bore you, don't you know, and all that sort of rot, but I must tell you about dear old Freddie Meadowes. I'm not a flier at literary style, and all that, but I'll get some writer chappie to give the thing a wash and brush up when I've finished, so that'll be all right.

Dear old Freddie, don't you know, has been a dear old pal of mine for years and years; so when I went into the club one morning and found him sitting alone in a dark corner, staring glassily at nothing, and generally looking like the last rose of summer, you can understand I was quite disturbed about it. As a rule, the old rotter is the life and soul of our set. Quite the little lump of fun, and all that sort of thing.

Jimmy Pinkerton was with me at the time. Jimmy's a fellow who writes plays; a deuced brainy sort of fellow. My name's Pepper, by the way—Reggie Pepper. My uncle Edward was Pepper, Wells, and Co., the colliery people. When he died he left me a pretty decent bit of money. Well, as I was saying, Jimmy was with me, and between us we set to work to question the poor pop-eyed chappie, until finally we got at what the matter was.

As we might have guessed, it was a girl. He had had a quarrel with Angela West, the girl he was engaged to, and she had broken off the engagement. What the row had been about he didn't say, but apparently she was pretty well fed up. She wouldn't let him come near her, refused to talk on the 'phone, and sent back his letters unopened.

I was sorry for poor old Freddie. I knew what it felt like. I was once in love myself with a girl called Elizabeth Shoolbred, and the fact that she couldn't stand me at any price will be recorded in my autobiography. I knew the thing for Freddie.

"Change of scene is what you want, old scout," I said. "Come with me to Marvis Bay. I've taken a cottage there. Jimmy's coming down on the twenty-fourth. We'll be a cosy party."

"He's absolutely right," said Jimmy. "Change of scene's the thing. I knew a man. Girl refused him. Man went abroad. Two months later girl wired him, 'Come back. Muriel.' Man started to write out a reply; suddenly found that he couldn't remember girl's surname; so never answered at all."

But Freddie wouldn't be comforted. He just went on looking as if he had swallowed his last sixpence. However, I got him to promise to come to Marvis Bay with me. He said he might as well be there as anywhere.

Do you know Marvis Bay? It's in Dorsetshire. It isn't what you'd call a fiercely-exciting spot, but it has its good points. You spend the day there bathing and sitting on the sands, and in the evening you stroll out on the shore with the gnats. At nine o'clock you rub ointment on the wounds and go to bed.

It seemed to suit poor old Freddie. Once the moon was up and the breeze sighing in the trees, you couldn't drag him from that beach with a rope. He became quite a popular pet with the gnats. They'd hang round waiting for him to come out, and would give perfectly good strollers the miss-in-baulk just so as to be in good condition for him.

Yes, it was a peaceful sort of life, but by the end of the first week I began to wish that Jimmy Pinkerton had arranged to come down earlier; for as a companion Freddie, poor old chap, wasn't anything to write home to mother about. When he wasn't chewing a pipe and scowling at the carpet, he was sitting at the piano, playing "The Rosary" with one finger. He couldn't play anything except "The Rosary," and he couldn't play much of that. Somewhere round about the third bar a fuse would blow out, and he'd have to start all over again.

He was playing it as usual one morning when I came in from bathing.

"Reggie," he said, in a hollow voice, looking up, "I've seen her."

"Seen her?" I said. "What, Miss West?"

"I was down at the post-office, getting the letters, and we met in the doorway. She cut me!"

He started "The Rosary" again, and side-slipped in the second bar.

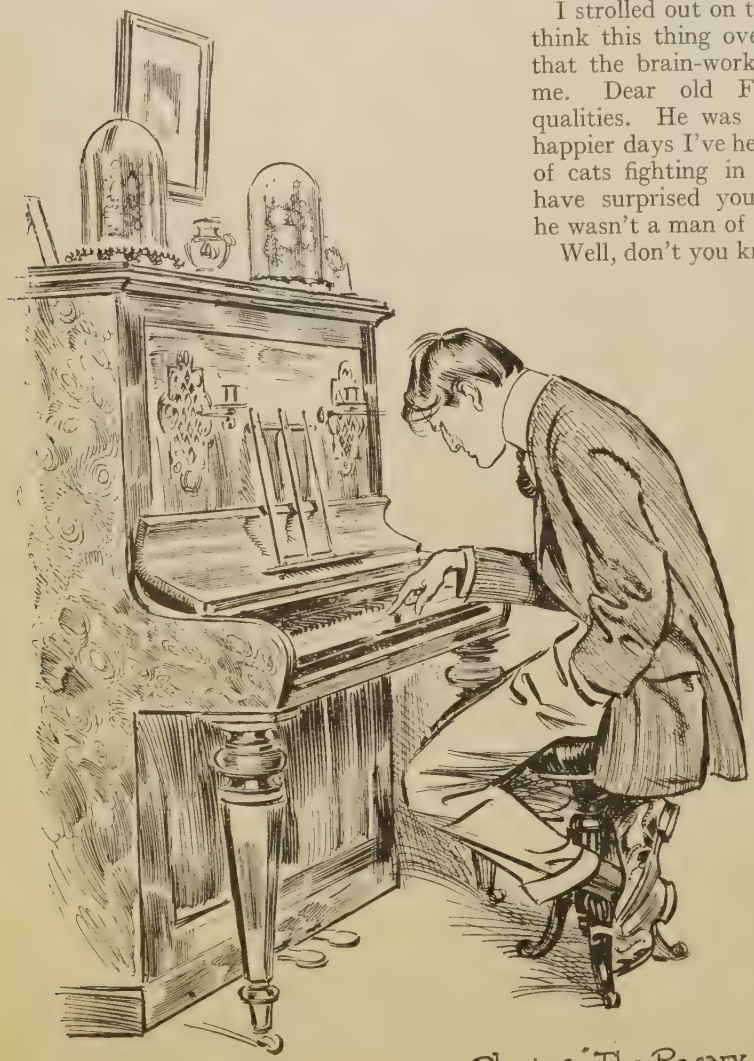
"Reggie," he said, "you ought never to have brought me here. I must go away."

"Go away?" I said. "Don't talk such rot. This is the best thing that could have happened. This is where you come out strong."

"She cut me."

"Never mind. Be a sportsman Have another dash at her."

"She looked clean through me!"



Playing "The Rosary" with one finger

"Of course she did. But don't mind that. Put this thing in my hands. I'll see you through. Now, what you want," I said, "is to place her under some obligation to you. What you want is to get her timidly thanking you. What you want——"

"But what's she going to thank me timidly for?"

I thought for a moment.

"Look out for a chance and save her from drowning," I said.

"I can't swim," said Freddie.

That was Freddie all over, don't you know. A dear old chap in a thousand ways, but no help to a fellow, if you know what I mean.

He cranked up the piano once more and I sprinted for the open.

I strolled out on to the sands and began to think this thing over. There was no doubt that the brain-work had got to be done by me. Dear old Freddie had his strong qualities. He was top-hole at polo, and in happier days I've heard him give an imitation of cats fighting in a back-yard that would have surprised you. But apart from that he wasn't a man of enterprise.

Well, don't you know, I was rounding some rocks, with my brain whirring like a dynamo, when I caught sight of a blue dress, and, by Jove, it was the girl. I had never met her, but Freddie had sixteen photographs of her sprinkled round his bedroom, and I knew I couldn't be mistaken. She was sitting on the sand, helping a small, fat child build a castle. On a chair close by was an elderly lady reading a novel. I heard the girl call her "aunt." So, doing the Sherlock Holmes business, I deduced that the fat child was her cousin. It struck me that if Freddie had been there he would probably have tried to work up some sentiment about the kid on the strength of it. Personally I couldn't manage it. I don't think I ever saw a child who made me feel less sentimental. He was one of those round, bulging kids.

After he had finished the castle he seemed to get bored with life, and began to whimper. The girl took him off to where a fellow was selling sweets at a stall. And I walked on.

Now, fellows, if you ask them, will tell you that I'm a chump. Well, I don't mind.

I admit it. I *am* a chump. All the Peppers have been chumps. But what I do say is that every now and then, when you'd least expect it, I get a pretty hot brain-wave: and that's what happened now. I doubt if the idea that came to me then would have occurred to a single one of any dozen of the brainiest chappies you care to name.

It came to me on my return journey. I was walking back along the shore, when I saw the fat kid meditatively smacking a jelly-fish with a spade. The girl wasn't with him. In fact, there didn't seem to be anyone in sight. I was just going to pass on when I got the brain-wave. I thought the whole thing out in a flash, don't you know. From what I had seen of the two, the girl was evidently fond of this kid, and, anyhow, he was her cousin, so what I said to myself was this: If I kidnap this young heavy-weight for the moment, and if, when the girl has got frightfully anxious about where he can have got to, dear old Freddie suddenly appears leading the infant by the hand and telling a story to the effect that he has found him wandering at large about the country and practically saved his life, why, the girl's gratitude is bound to make her chuck hostilities and be friends again. So I gathered in the kid and made off with him. All the way home I pictured that scene of reconciliation. I could see it so vividly, don't you know, that, by George, it gave me quite a choky feeling in my throat.

Freddie, dear old chap, was rather slow at getting on to the fine points of the idea. When I appeared, carrying the kid, and dumped him down in our sitting-room, he didn't absolutely effervesce with joy, if you know what I mean. The kid had started to bellow by this time, and poor old Freddie seemed to find it rather trying.

Helping a small, fat child build a castle

"Stop it!" he said. "Do you think nobody's got any troubles except you? What the deuce is all this, Reggie?"

The kid came back at him with a yell that made the window rattle. I raced to the kitchen and fetched a jar of honey. It was the right stuff. The kid stopped bellowing and began to smear his face with the stuff.

"Well?" said Freddie, when silence had set in.

I explained the idea. After a while it began to strike him.

"You're not such a fool as you look, sometimes, Reggie," he said, handsomely. "I'm bound to say this seems pretty good."

And he disentangled the kid from the honey-jar and took him out, to scour the beach for Angela.

I don't know when I've felt so happy. I

was so fond of dear old Freddie that to know that he was so soon going to be his old bright self again made me feel as if somebody had left me about a million pounds. I was leaning back in a chair on the veranda, smoking peacefully, when down the road I saw the old boy returning, and, by George, the kid was still with him. And Freddie looked as if he hadn't a friend in the world.

"Hello!" I said. "Couldn't you find her?"

"Yes, I found her," he replied, with one of those bitter, hollow laughs.

"Well, then——?"

Freddie sank into a chair and groaned.

"This isn't her cousin, you idiot!" he said. "He's no relation at all. He's just a kid she happened to meet on the beach. She had never seen him before in her life."

"What! Who is he, then?"

"I don't know. Oh, Lord, I've had a time! Thank goodness you'll probably spend the next few years of your life in Dartmoor for kidnapping. That's my only consolation. I'll come and jeer at you through the bars."

"Tell me all, old boy," I said.

It took him a good long time to tell the story, for he broke off in the middle of nearly every sentence to call me names, but I gathered gradually what had happened. She had listened like an iceberg while he told the story he had prepared, and then—well, she didn't actually call him a liar, but she gave him to understand in a general sort of way that if he and Dr. Cook ever happened to meet, and started swapping stories, it would be about the biggest duel on record. And then he had crawled away with the kid, licked to a splinter.

"And mind, this is your affair," he concluded. "I'm not mixed up in it at all. If you want to escape your sentence, you'd better go and find the kid's parents and return him before the police come for you."

By Jove, you know, till I started to tramp the place with this infernal kid, I never had a notion it would have been so deuced difficult to restore a child to its anxious parents. It's a mystery to me how kidnappers ever get caught. I searched Marvis Bay like a bloodhound, but nobody came forward to claim the infant. You'd have thought, from the lack of interest in him, that he was stopping there all by himself in a cottage of his own. It wasn't till, by an inspiration, I thought to ask the sweet-stall man that I found out that his name was Medwin, and that his parents lived at a place called Ocean Rest, in Beach Road.

I shot off there like an arrow and knocked at the door. Nobody answered. I knocked again. I could hear movements inside, but nobody came. I was just going to get to work on that knocker in such a way that the idea would filter through into these people's heads that I wasn't standing there just for the fun of the thing, when a voice from somewhere above shouted, "Hi!"

I looked up and saw a round, pink face, with grey whiskers east and west of it, staring down from an upper window.

"Hi!" it shouted again.

"What the deuce do you mean by 'Hi'?" I said.

"You can't come in," said the face. "Hello, is that Tootles?"

"My name is not Tootles, and I don't want to come in," I said. "Are you Mr. Medwin? I've brought back your son."

"I see him. Peep-bo, Tootles! Dadda can see 'oo!"

The face disappeared with a jerk. I could hear voices. The face reappeared.

"Hi!"

I churned the gravel madly.

"Do you live here?" said the face.

"I'm staying here for a few weeks."

"What's your name?"

"Pepper. But——"

"Pepper? Any relation to Edward Pepper, the colliery owner?"

"My uncle. But——"

"I used to know him well. Dear old Edward Pepper! I wish I was with him now."

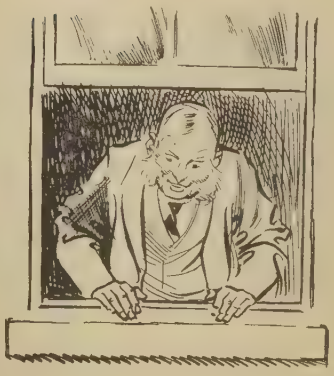
"I wish you were," I said.

He beamed down at me.

"This is most fortunate," he said. "We were wondering what we were to do with Tootles. You see, we have the mumps here. My daughter Bootles has just developed mumps. Tootles must not be exposed to the risk of infection. We could not think what we were to do with him. It was most fortunate your finding him. He strayed from his nurse. I would hesitate to trust him to the care of a stranger, but you are different. Any nephew of Edward Pepper's has my implicit confidence. You must take Tootles to your house. It will be an ideal arrangement. I have written to my brother in London to come and fetch him. He may be here in a few days."

"May!"

"He is a busy man, of course; but he should certainly be here within a week. Till then Tootles can stop with you. It is an excellent plan. Very much obliged to you. Your wife will like Tootles."



"I haven't got a wife," I yelled; but the window had closed with a bang, as if the man with the whiskers had found a germ trying to escape, don't you know, and had headed it off just in time.

I breathed a deep breath and wiped my forehead.

The window flew up again.

"Hi!"

A package weighing about a ton hit me on the head and burst like a bomb.

"Did you catch it?" said the face, reappearing. "Dear me, you missed it! Never mind. You can get it at the grocer's. Ask for Bailey's Granulated Breakfast Chips. Tootles takes them for breakfast with a little milk. Be certain to get Bailey's."

My spirit was broken, if you know what I mean. I accepted the situation. Taking Tootles by the hand, I walked slowly away. Napoleon's retreat from Moscow was a picnic by the side of it.

As we turned up the road we met Freddie's Angela.

The sight of her had a marked effect on the kid Tootles. He pointed at her and said, "Wah!"

The girl stopped and smiled. I loosed the kid, and he ran to her.

"Well, baby?" she said, bending down to him. "So father found you again, did he? Your little son and I made friends on the beach this morning," she said to me.

This was the limit. Coming on top of that interview with the whiskered lunatic it so utterly unnerved me, don't you know, that she had nodded good-bye and was half-way down the road before I caught up with my breath enough to deny the charge of being the infant's father.

I hadn't expected dear old Freddie to sing with joy when he found out what had happened, but I did think he might have showed a little more manly fortitude. He leaped up, glared at the kid, and clutched his head. He didn't speak for a long time, but, on the other hand, when he began he did not leave off for a long time. He was quite emotional, dear old boy. It beat me where he could have picked up such expressions.

"Well," he said, when he had finished, "say something! Heavens! man, why don't you say something?"

"You don't give me a chance, old top," I said, soothingly.

"What are you going to do about it?"

"What *can* we do about it?"

"We can't spend our time acting as nurses to this—this exhibit."

He got up.

"I'm going back to London," he said.

"Freddie!" I cried. "Freddie, old man!" My voice shook. "Would you desert a pal at a time like this?"

"I would. This is your business, and you've got to manage it."

"Freddie," I said, "you've got to stand by me. You must. Do you realize that this child has to be undressed, and bathed, and dressed again? You wouldn't leave me to do all that single-handed? Freddie, old scout, we were at school together. Your mother likes me. You owe me a tenner."

He sat down again.

"Oh, well," he said, resignedly.

"Besides, old top," I said, "I did it all for your sake, don't you know?"

He looked at me in a curious way.

"Reggie," he said, in a strained voice, "one moment. I'll stand a good deal, but I won't stand for being expected to be grateful."

Looking back at it, I see that what saved me from Colney Hatch in that crisis was my bright idea of buying up most of the contents of the local sweet-shop. By serving out sweets to the kid practically incessantly we managed to get through the rest of that day pretty satisfactorily. At eight o'clock he fell asleep in a chair, and, having undressed him by unbuttoning every button in sight and, where there were no buttons, pulling till something gave, we carried him up to bed.

Freddie stood looking at the pile of clothes on the floor, and I knew what he was thinking. To get the kid undressed had been simple—a mere matter of muscle. But how were we to get him into his clothes again? I stirred the pile with my foot. There was a long linen arrangement which might have been anything. Also a strip of pink flannel which was like nothing on earth. We looked at each other and smiled wanly.

But in the morning I remembered that there were children at the next bungalow but one. We went there before breakfast and borrowed their nurse. Women are wonderful, by George they are! She had that kid dressed and looking fit for anything in about eight minutes. I showered wealth on her, and she promised to come in morning and evening. I sat down to breakfast almost cheerful again. It was the first bit of silver lining there had been to the cloud up to date.

"And after all," I said, "there's lots to be said for having a child about the house, if you know what I mean. Kind of cosy and domestic—what?"

Just then the kid upset the milk over Freddie's trousers, and when he had come back after changing his clothes he began to talk about what a much-maligned man King Herod was. The more he saw of Tootles, he said, the less he wondered at those impulsive views of his on infanticide.

Two days later Jimmy Pinkerton came down. Jimmy took one look at the kid, who happened to be howling at the moment, and picked up his portmanteau.

"For me," he said, "the hotel. I can't write dialogue with that sort of thing going on. Whose work is this? Which of you adopted this little treasure?"

I told him about Mr. Medwin and the mumps. Jimmy seemed interested.

"I might work this up for the stage," he said. "It wouldn't make a bad situation for act two of a farce."

"Farce!" snarled poor old Freddie.

"Rather. Curtain of act one on hero, a well-meaning, half-baked sort of idiot just like—that is to say, a well-meaning, half-baked sort of idiot, kidnapping the child. Second act, his adventures with it. I'll rough it out to-night. Come along and show me the hotel, Reggie."

As we went I told him the rest of the story, the Angela part. He laid down his portmanteau and looked at me like an owl through his glasses.

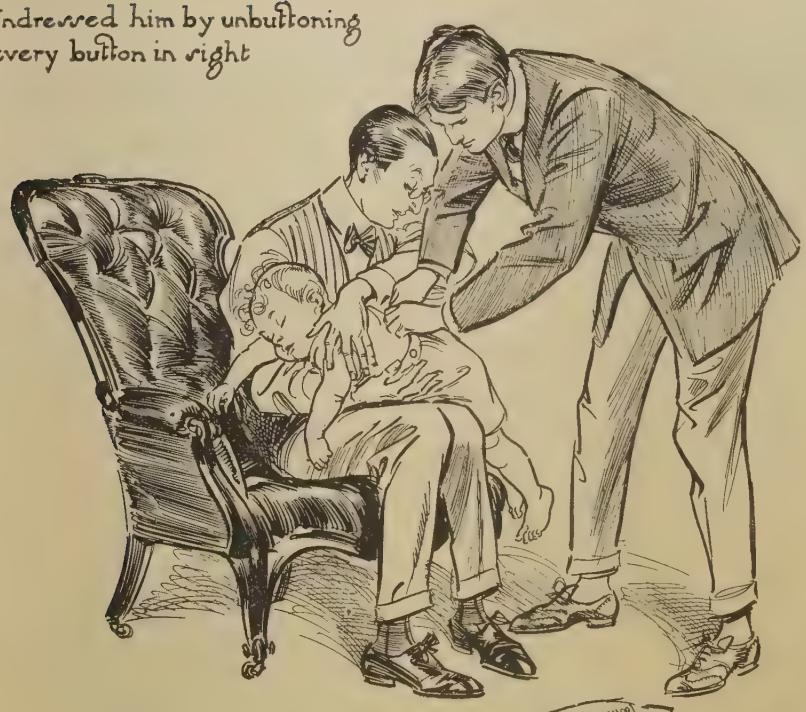
"What!" he said. "Why, hang it, this *is* a play, ready-made. It's the old 'Tiny Hand' business. Always safe stuff. Parted lovers. Lisping child. Reconciliation over the little cradle. It's big. Child, centre. Girl L.C.; Freddie, up stage, by the piano. Can Freddie play the piano?"

"He can play a little of 'The Rosary' with one finger."

Jimmy shook his head.

"No; we shall have to cut out the soft music. But the rest's all right. Look here." He squatted in the sand. "This stone is the girl. This bit of seaweed's the child. This nutshell is Freddie. Dialogue leading up to child's line. Child speaks like, 'Boofer lady, does 'oo love dadda?' Business of outstretched hands. Hold picture for a moment. Freddie crosses L., takes girl's hand. Business of swallowing lump in throat. Then big speech. 'Ah, Marie,' or whatever her name is—Jane—Agnes—Angela? Very well. 'Ah, Angela, has not this gone on too long? A little child rebukes us! Angela!' And so on. Freddie must work up his own part. I'm just giving you the general outline. And we must get a good line for the child. 'Boofer lady, does 'oo love dadda?' isn't definite enough. We want something more—ah! 'Kiss Freddie,' that's it. Short, crisp, and has the punch."

"But, Jimmy, old top," I said, "the only



objection is, don't you know, that there's no way of getting the girl to the cottage. She cuts Freddie. She wouldn't come within a mile of him."

Jimmy frowned.

"That's awkward," he said. "Well, we shall have to make it an exterior set instead of an interior. We can easily corner her on the beach somewhere, when we're ready. Meanwhile, we must get the kid letter-perfect. First rehearsal for lines and business eleven sharp to-morrow."

Poor old Freddie was in such a gloomy state of mind that we decided not to tell him the idea till we had finished coaching the kid. He wasn't in the mood to have a thing like that hanging over him. So we concentrated on Tootles. And pretty early in the proceedings we saw that the only way to get Tootles worked up to the spirit of the thing was to introduce sweets of some sort as a sub-motive, so to speak.

"The chief difficulty," said Jimmy Pinkerton, at the end of the first rehearsal, "is to establish a connection in the kid's mind between his line and the sweets. Once he has grasped the basic fact that those two words, clearly spoken, result automatically in acid-drops, we have got a success."

I've often thought, don't you know, how interesting it must be to be one of those animal-trainer Johnnies: to stimulate the dawning intelligence, and that sort of thing. Well, this was every bit as exciting. Some days success seemed to be staring us in the eye, and the kid got the line out as if he'd been an old professional. And then he'd go all to pieces again. And time was flying.

"We must hurry up, Jimmy," I said. "The kid's uncle may arrive any day now and take him away."

"And we haven't an understudy," said Jimmy. "There's something in that. We must work! My goodness, that kid's a bad study. I've known deaf-mutes who would have learned the part quicker."

I will say this for the kid, though: he was a trier. Failure didn't discourage him. Whenever there was any kind of sweet near he had a dash at his line, and kept on saying something till he got what he was after. His only fault was his uncertainty. Personally, I would have been prepared to risk it, and

start the performance at the first opportunity, but Jimmy said no.

"We're not nearly ready," said Jimmy. "To-day, for instance, he said 'Kick Freddie.' That's not going to win any girl's heart. And she might do it, too. No; we must postpone production awhile yet."

But, by George, we didn't. The curtain went up the very next afternoon.

It was nobody's fault—certainly not mine. It was just Fate. Freddie had settled down at the piano, and I was leading the kid out of the house to exercise it, when, just as we'd got out on to the veranda, along came the girl Angela on her way to the beach. The kid set up his usual yell at the sight of her, and she stopped at the foot of the steps.

"Hello, baby!" she said. "Good morning," she said to me. "May I come up?"

She didn't wait for an answer. She just came. She seemed to be that sort of girl. She came up on the veranda and started fussing over the kid. And six feet away, mind you, Freddie smiting the piano in the sitting-room. It was a dashed disturbing situation, don't you know. At any minute Freddie might take it into his head to come out on to the veranda, and we hadn't even begun to rehearse him in his part.

I tried to break up the scene.

"We were just going down to the beach," I said.

"Yes?" said the girl. She listened for a moment. "So you're having your piano tuned?" she said. "My aunt has been trying to find a tuner for ours. Do you mind if I go in and tell this man to come on to us when he's finished here?"

"Er—not yet," I said. "Not yet, if you don't mind. He can't bear to be disturbed when he's working. It's the artistic temperament. I'll tell him later."

"Very well," she said, getting up to go. "Ask him to call at Pine Bungalow. West is the name. Oh, he seems to have stopped. I suppose he will be out in a minute now. I'll wait."

"Don't you think—shouldn't we be going on to the beach?" I said.

She had started talking to the kid and didn't hear. She was feeling in her pocket for something.

"The beach," I babbled.

"See what I've brought for you, baby," she said. And, by George, don't you know, she held up in front of the kid's bulging eyes a chunk of toffee about the size of the Automobile Club.

That finished it. We had just been having a long rehearsal, and the kid was all worked up in his part. He got it right first time.

"Kiss Fweddie!" he shouted.

And the front door opened, and Freddie came out on to the veranda, for all the world as if he had been taking a cue.

He looked at the girl, and the girl looked at him. I looked at the ground, and the kid looked at the toffee.

"Kiss Fweddie!" he yelled. "Kiss Fweddie!"

The girl was still holding up the toffee, and the kid did what Jimmy Pinkerton would have called "business of outstretched hands" towards it.

"Kiss Fweddie!" he shrieked.

"What does this mean?" said the girl, turning to me.

"You'd better give it him, don't you know," I said. "He'll go on till you do."

She gave the kid his toffee, and he sub-

sided. Poor old Freddie still stood there gaping, without a word.

"What does it mean?" said the girl again. Her face was pink, and her eyes were sparkling in the sort of way, don't you know, that makes a fellow feel as if he hadn't any

bones in him, if you know what I mean. Did you ever tread on your partner's dress at a dance and tear it, and see her smile at you like an angel and say: "*Please* don't apologize. It's nothing," and then suddenly meet her clear blue eyes and feel as if you had stepped on the teeth of a rake and had the handle jump up and hit you in the face? Well, that's how Freddie's Angela looked.

"*Well?*" she said, and her teeth gave a little click.

I gulped. Then I said it was nothing. Then I said it was nothing much. Then I said, "Oh, well, it was this way." And, after a few brief remarks about Jimmy Pinkerton, I told her all about it. And all the while Idiot Freddie stood there gaping, without a word.

And the girl didn't speak, either. She just stood listening.

And then she began to laugh. I never heard a girl laugh so much. She leaned against the side of the veranda and shrieked. And all the while Freddie, the World's Champion Chump, stood there, saying nothing.

Well, I sidled towards the steps. I had said all I had to say, and it seemed to me that about here the stage-direction "exit" was written in my part. I gave poor old Freddie up in despair. If only he had said a word, it might have been all right. But there he stood, speechless. What can a fellow do with a fellow like that?

Just out of sight of the house I met Jimmy Pinkerton.

"Hello, Reggie!" he said. "I was just coming to you. Where's the kid? We must have a big rehearsal to-day."

"No good," I said, sadly. "It's all over. The thing's finished. Poor dear old Freddie has made an ass of himself and killed the whole show."

"Tell me," said Jimmy.

I told him.

"Fluffed in his lines, did he?" said Jimmy, nodding thoughtfully. "It's always the way with these amateurs. We must go back at once. Things look bad, but it may not be too late," he said, as we started. "Even now a few well-chosen words from a man of the world, and——"

"Great Scot!" I cried. "Look!"

In front of the cottage stood six children, a nurse, and the fellow from the grocer's staring. From the windows of the houses opposite projected about four hundred heads of both sexes, staring. Down the road came galloping five more children, a dog, three men, and a boy, about to stare. And on our porch, as unconscious of the spectators as if they had been alone in the Sahara, stood Freddie and Angela, clasped in each other's arms.

Dear old Freddie may have been fluffy in his lines, but, by George, his business had certainly gone with a bang!

"WHEN THE NEW ZEALANDER COMES."

By PROF. BLYDE MUDDERSNOOK, P.O.Z.A.S.

Illustrated by W. E. Wigfull.

". . . When some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."—*Macaulay.*

FOR some years past the extraordinary finds of the Dr. Slovak-Bagster of Patagonia had aroused the deepest interest in ancient London archæology. Certain objects which had been acquired by the Auckland National Museum—one believed to be an effigy of an English warrior, Arthur Duke (of Wellington), *circa anno* 1850 of the Christian era, and a portion of a curious metal chariot or mota-car with a legend, D-468—have been inspected by thousands of Zealanders. Recollecting that this half-mythical city of Lun-dun, or Londinium, was once the capital of our race, funds to the extent of forty thousand pundas were speedily granted by the Zealand National Council for the purpose of dispatching a scientific party to England to undertake special work of excavation of the site of Lun-dun and the Cockni region in the vicinity of the River Thames.

To begin with, it may be stated that our party consisted of Colonel Binns Smoodle, P.D., S.R., Dr. Tite Opkins, R.O. (the distinguished architect-draughtsman, who has already been engaged in excavations at Paris —otherwise the Gace City, believed to be the headquarters of the Gaces—and Berlin, notable as the home of the Germs or Sheenies), Fellow Mustard Snip (the solarist, whose solar prints of ancient Chicago have won him several radium medals), and myself.

We left Auckland fully equipped on the ninth of Thermoso, s.c. 5607, and five days later alighted at Lloydville, on the southern coast of the island of Wallia, formerly Britain, or Angleland. From thence we made our way northward through the Wallish forests until, after many hardships and difficulties, which it is not necessary to recount, we reached the ancient village of Suthuk, which is on the edge of the river-bed of the Thames, most of which is now reclaimed land planted with cabbages, the export of which forms the principal staple of the country.

Two of the most enlightened of the inhabitants, who, it is regrettable to know, have sunk very low in the scale of intelligence, undertook to guide us to the principal spots customarily visited by travellers. Our first destination was the vestiges of the once famous Lun-dun Bridge, mentioned in many ancient accounts and in one folk-lore ballad which has come down to us beginning, "Lun-dun Bridge is falling down." Several arches of this structure now span the intervening space between the village of Suthuk and the extremely picturesque ruins which are visible on the summit of an opposite eminence.

These ruins are now all that is left of the once famous Cockni cathedral of St. Paul's. It was a superb day in early autumn when we halted to survey the scene, and my talented friend, Dr. Tite Opkins, took up his post on one of the shattered arches, in order to make a sketch of the ruins. Another colleague, Mr. Mustard Snip, proceeded to make some solar prints of the immediate neighbourhood, which is one much haunted by bitterns.

After a brief delay, leaving Dr. Opkins engaged in his congenial task, the rest of the party pressed forward and began to make an investigation of the remains of this once populous and opulent city at closer quarters. It is difficult for me to describe vividly the general ruin and desolation which now pervade this celebrated spot.

Several benighted peasants, who, we are told, claim to be the last survivors of the tribe of the Cocknies, now began to gather around us, and to offer for barter certain objects which they had dug up at various times in the vicinity. I will not undertake to enumerate all these objects, many of which possess considerable archæological interest. Amongst them was a curious and complicated instrument, concerning whose use we are not agreed, but which corresponds in many particulars to the description which has come down to us of an ancient English machine, in which certain characters were impressed upon sheets of paper, called a write-typer.

"THESE RUINS ARE ALL THAT IS NOW LEFT OF THE ONCE FAMOUS CATHEDRAL OF ST. PAUL'S."

Another was a large brass horn, which Colonel Smoodle thought might be the trumpet commonly in use for calling members of the Radical or Tory tribes together, but which Dr. Opkins believes to be the megaphone attached to an ancient gramophone. Several wheels, with dozens of slender spokes, thought to belong to an old English machine known as the *bicycle*, were also brought to us, together with curious warped staves tipped with brass and steel, used by the players of the long extinct game of *golf*.

We made our way by degrees into the ruins of the cathedral, which now afford a singular aspect of picturesque solitude.

Having got together a set of workmen, we commenced the labour of excavation in the most likely spot, and daily awaited the results with eagerness. After digging down a depth of twenty-nine feet, the pickaxe struck a metal substance, which proved to be a bronze statue in an excellent state of preservation. This evidently was part of a sarcophagus, which probably enclosed the remains of a hero hitherto supposed to have been legendary, an Oriental warrior known in fable as Chinese Gordon. The remains of other statues were unearthed, including the head of a statue believed to be that of Joshua Reynolds, or Reynolds Joshua, who, it will be remembered, commanded the sun to pause in his flight, in order that he might paint it. We also came across vestiges of a huge musical instrument, very much esteemed

three or four thousand years ago, and known as the organ. This particular specimen—as Dr. Schmutz, in his monograph of Ancient England, has shown—was considered one of the finest in Great Britain, being divided into two parts, one on each side of the choir, with connecting mechanism under the choir flooring. It emitted strange vibrating sounds, sometimes resembling the tones of the human voice and other times of thunder.

In the course of the next three months a most astonishing collection of fragments of statues and of mural decoration rewarded our efforts. One in particular we were desirous of exhuming, in order to confirm the passage from the old English chronicler, Macaulay, quoted in Schmutz's monumental work, before the Wallish fog and rainy season known as winter set in. I am glad to be able to report that the tablet in memory of Christophorus Wren, the builder of the cathedral, with the inscription containing the words, "Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice," was brought to light, and has been shipped to old Zealand.

It is impossible to convey an idea of the horrors of the Wallish climate at this season of the year. It rendered it impossible for us to continue our labours. Indeed, it is no wonder that this island became gradually depopulated in the course of centuries, when its inhabitants had to endure such climatic hardships. Indeed, to one accustomed to the climates of old Zealand, Australis, Krugerland, Mapleland, Dai-Nippon, and other parts of the world, not to mention Mars and the moon, it is hard to realize how any intelligent race of men would consent to continue existence in such a bleak island.

When we eventually resumed our excavations at St. Paul's, we were rewarded by coming across what is undoubtedly the once famous lantern formerly above the dome. On the top of the lantern once rested a ball, surmounted by a cross, both together weighing three thousand four hundred and sixty-two mullia—or, in the system of weights then believed to be in vogue, eight thousand nine hundred and sixty pounds. The ball was six feet in diameter, and could hold ten or twelve persons within. Judge, therefore, what must have been the majesty of this structure three thousand years ago! Its height was four hundred and eighty peda, or three hundred and sixty-four English feet—the scale of measurement being derived from the size of the human foot, which was much larger amongst the English people than it is at present.

Meanwhile, other workmen were busily engaged in investigations, under our direction, in the immediate neighbourhood. One of these was on the site of a building which at one time must have borne the legend in gilt letters "Lyons," probably one of those temples mentioned by Dr. Schmutz, frequented by the population of all classes for the consumption of a beverage known as *tea*, or tay. In the foundation-stone of this building was made a memorable discovery, and what has hitherto hardly been believed to exist—namely, copies of the daily journals of Lun-dun in the Christian year 1912. This find created the utmost excitement amongst scholars throughout the civilized world. It was comparable to the fabled discovery by the antique demi-god Napoleon of the so-called Rosetta Stone, which unlocked as if by magic the repository of the secrets of the Egyptian past. The key to the whole of these journals or newspapers has not yet been found, but learned men are engaged upon them, and no doubt much of great interest will be revealed. One of these printed documents (or *newspapers*, as they were called) bore the title of the *Daily Telegraph*. The telegraph was, it will be remembered, the instrument for conveying messages from one place to another by means of electrical currents passing along wires. Why the newspaper bore this name has not yet been elucidated. The whole document, however, is a mine of great philological value, and contains many rare words and phrases not to be found elsewhere. Another document, superscribed *Daily Yarn*, is an even greater curiosity. It contains references to events which the learned Dr. Schmutz, Professor Zammer, and others declare could not possibly ever have happened, and is therefore supposed to have been the joint composition of talented fabulists, whose little tales appear to have enjoyed a wide popularity three thousand years ago. A specimen of the picture papers of the period was also found, exhibiting on either side of the leaf bizarre reproductions in black ink of current episodes, some of them very instructive and entertaining, although difficult to connect with human life at any period of the world's history.

Not far distant from St. Paul's are the ruins of the ancient fortress and gloomy State prison of Lun-dun, once held to be historically the most interesting spot in Angleland. It was called the Tower, and was built by one William, surnamed the Conqueror. The chapel of St. John, which

THE RUINS OF THE ANCIENT FORTRESS AND STATE PRISON, CALLED THE TOWER."

was once situated on the second floor of the structure, had long disappeared; but at a depth of fifty feet its massive pillars and cubical capitols, its wide triforium, its apse, its ruined arches, and its barrel-vaulted ceiling were unearthed by the excavators. A great deal of armour was also found—that is, a kind of steel clothing—which is supposed to have been worn by the famous personages of Angleland's mightiest period—Asquith, Lloyd George, Churchill, and others—to protect them effectually against the assaults of their enemies.

From the Tower we eventually proceeded along the banks of the river to a temple of even greater renown, no less than the Westminster Abbey of English legend. This famous structure, to which the name of Walhalla has been applied, stands on low ground on the left bank, overgrown with thorns and surrounded by a marsh. The Abbey formerly contained numerous Royal burial vaults and a long series of monuments to celebrated men. Interment within these walls was held to be the last and greatest honour which the nation could bestow on the most illustrious of her sons. It was also the place where the English Kings and Queens were crowned, with great pomp. Alas, what is left of this glory to-day? A picturesque and venerable ruin which the piety of one of the Cockni tribes, after great labour, exposed over a century ago to the light. It is with feelings almost too deep for words that we pass the site of the nave, chancel, and cloister, and remember the scenes doubtless enacted here thousands of years ago. At first we encountered some difficulty in commencing our operations, owing to the prejudice of some of the natives, but when our intentions were finally explained to them and several had been sufficiently bribed, we were allowed to continue the work. After removing some six million cubic peda of rubbish, which was carted away, we came across a marble effigy, which has been identified as that of the statesman William Pitt, in the company of two other figures, one representing History listening to his words, and the other Anarchy in chains. These highly interesting specimens of the sculpture of old Angleland in its prime have been presented by our Government to the President of Siberia.

One of the conclusions resulting from our excavations at Westminster was the exposure of the fallacy that only great men were buried in the Abbey, for we came across numerous vaults of persons not mentioned in Schmutz's lists. Several of them have since been shown to be persons of small consequence: John Blow, who played the organ

"THE WESTMINSTER ABBEY OF ENGLISH LEGEND."

at one time; Elizabeth Warren, widow of a Bishop William Thynne; John Ernest Grabb; Thomas Shadwell, the poet; Peter Brown, aged seven years; Esmé Stuart, aged ten; Aphra Behn, a lady who wrote *shilling shockers* (as certain light romances were then called); Suzanna Davidson, daughter of a rich merchant of Rotterdam, and other celebrities of that stamp.

We succeeded in exhuming large fragments of a most extraordinary piece of sculpture, which at first we supposed must be that of some great monarch, statesman, or warrior. It represented Death emerging from a tomb and launching his dart at a lady in the act of dying, while her husband tries to ward off the attack. This striking work was, however, shown to commemorate the memory of a Mr. and Mrs. Bird, of whom nothing is known except that they conducted a very successful drapery establishment somewhere near the Via Oxford.

We left a large party at work busily restoring Westminster

Abbey, so that it yet may present some notion of its former greatness. But at present funds are sorely lacking for the purpose, inasmuch as the municipality of Lloydville has failed to grant the money we had hoped for.

Closely adjacent to the Abbey are the imposing ruins of the Gothic temple of Parliament, which was dedicated to St. Stephen. Here was where the statesmen, orators, and politicians assembled by hundreds daily thousands of years ago. Fragments of their debates may be read in Schmutz, and excite in us now the utmost astonishment that the affairs of a great nation should have been conducted in such a manner. Excavations on this site have yielded many finds of antiquarian interest, amongst them being a small iron box, upon which the initials "F. E. S." are still visible. When this box was broken open several sheets of paper were found, still in a state of good preservation. One of these sheets was headed, "Mems. for the Day. Give Winston beans. No warrant for barriers. Disgraceful arrogance of power," etc., the exact significance of which has so far escaped our scholiasts.

But, great as was the interest which these magnificent ruins aroused in us, there were some who were filled with a greater fervour at the thought of bringing to light some relics of that world-famous library and archæological collection known as the British Museum.

Making our way thither, across fields covered

"THE IMPOSING RUINS OF THE GOTHIC TEMPLE OF PARLIAMENT."

"THE BRITISH MUSEUM—THE RELICS OF A ONCE STATELY PILE."

with undergrowth and small timber, with occasional woodmen's cottages, we came to the northern side of what was once the road running between Lun-dun and Oxford, and the relics of a once stately pile. This building is said to date back to the first half of the nineteenth century of the Christian era, and was built by two brothers named Smirke. Within it was gathered an enormous collection of printed books, manuscripts, prints, and drawings, antiquities, coins, and medals. What is now left of all this wealth? Bats and swallows now circle about what was once the great reading-room, and moss and ivy cover a great part of the ruins. It is said that pigeons once resorted here in large numbers, and tales are related which seem to us now incredible.

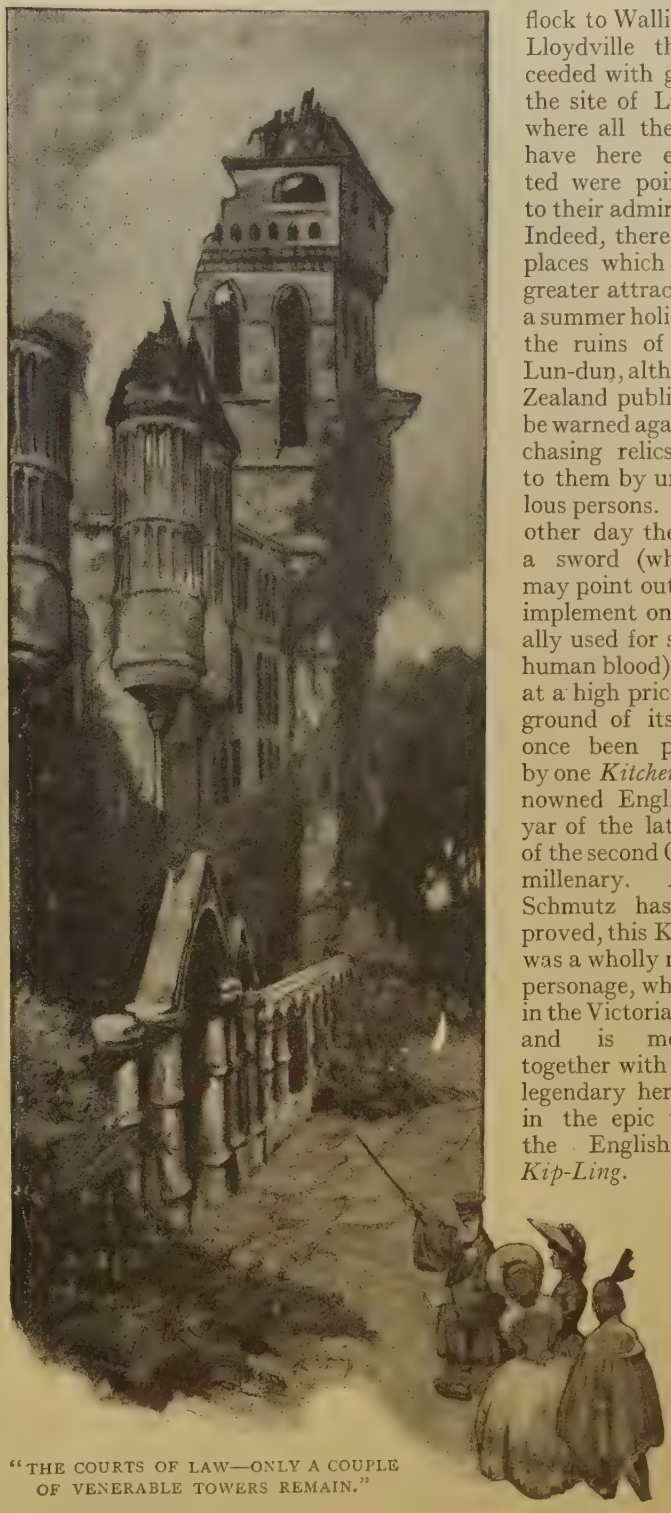
Several highly interesting finds were made in this vicinity. It must be remembered that the average difference of level between the ancient site of Lun-dun and the modern village is seventy-two feet. This corresponds to the difference of level which was found between the ancient and later Rome, as recorded in phonograph discs dating about the year 2000. For instance, we are told that a pedestal inscribed with the name of Næratius Cerialis, formerly in the inner courtyard in the House of the Vestals in the Forum, was found perpendicular and intact at this depth. At a depth of nearly eighty feet we came across portions of the inscription which formerly ran around the top of the reading-room, inscribed with such names as "Tennyson," "Wordsworth," and "Milton," who are believed to have been poets of that period, but whose writings have not come down to us.

We are told that in the reign of the fifth George the Courts of Law were regarded as one of the most imposing structures of the capital. Here foregathered all the professors of that mysterious system called Law in ancient times—chief justices, judges, barristers, solicitors, and other of the strange hierarchy long since obsolete. The halls in which they plied their calling have almost disappeared, and only a couple of venerable towers remain. Beneath the tons of stone,

brick, and other *débris* it is believed much of archæological interest is buried, which persistent excavation will bring to light.

Altogether the impression made upon us was one of admiration mingled with awe and wonder at these monuments of a past civilization. No doubt it seemed to the inhabitants of ancient Angleland and their mighty city of Lun-dun, whose ardent and enterprising spirits roamed through the world, founding colonies and establishing an opulent empire, that they would escape the fate which had overtaken Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, that the solidity of their structures would baffle the tooth of Time. But, although they have thus passed away and left nothing but these relics to attest their former magnificence and glory, yet the English people doubtless played their part in hastening on the ultimate civilization and beautification of the world and adjacent planets which we to-day witness.

As a result of the unofficial reports made by our party and widely circulated by the news-cylinders throughout Zealand, large numbers of tourists instantly began to flock to Wallia. From Lloydville they proceeded with guides to the site of Lun-dun, where all the ruins I have here enumerated were pointed out to their admiring eyes. Indeed, there are few places which promise greater attractions for a summer holiday than the ruins of ancient Lun-dun, although the Zealand public should be warned against purchasing relics offered to them by unscrupulous persons. Only the other day the hilt of a sword (which, we may point out, was an implement once actually used for shedding human blood) was sold at a high price, on the ground of its having once been possessed by one *Kitchener*, a renowned English soldyar of the latter part of the second Christian millenary. As Dr. Schmutz has clearly proved, this Kitchener was a wholly mythical personage, who figures in the Victorian fables, and is mentioned together with another legendary hero, *Bobs*, in the epic verse of the English bard, *Kip-Ling*.



"THE COURTS OF LAW—ONLY A COUPLE OF VENERABLE TOWERS REMAIN."

Judith Lee: Pages from Her Life.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by J. R. Skelton.

[A new detective method is such a rare thing that it is with unusual pleasure we continue the adventures of Judith Lee, the fortunate possessor of a gift which gives her a place apart in detective fiction. Mr. Marsh's heroine is one whose fortunes we predict with confidence, will be followed with the greatest interest from month to month.]

II.—Eavesdropping at Interlaken.

HAVE sometimes thought that this gift of mine for reading words as they issue from people's lips places me, with or without my will, in the position of the eavesdropper. There have been occasions on which, before I knew it, I have been made cognisant of conversations, of confidences, which were meant to be sacred; and, though such knowledge has been acquired through no fault of mine, I have felt ashamed, just as if I had been listening at a key-hole, and I have almost wished that the power which Nature gave me, and which years of practice have made perfect, was not mine at all. On the other hand, there have been times when I was very glad indeed that I was able to play the part of eavesdropper. As, to very strict purists, this may not sound a pleasant confession to make, I will give an instance of the kind of thing I mean.

I suppose I was about seventeen; I know I had just put my hair up, which had grown to something like a decent length since it had come in contact with the edge of that doughty Scottish chieftain's—MacGregor's—knife. My mother was not very well. My father was reluctant to leave her. It looked as if the summer holiday which had been promised me was in peril, when two acquaintances, Mr. and Mrs. Travers, rather than that I should lose it altogether, offered to take me under their wing. They were going for a little tour in Switzerland, proposing to spend most of their time at Interlaken, and my parents, feeling that I should be perfectly safe with them, accepted their proffered chaperonage. Everything went well until we got to Interlaken. There they met some friends who were going on a climbing expedition, and, as Mr. and Mrs. Travers were both keen mountaineers, they were very eager to join them. I was the only difficulty in their way. They could not say exactly how long they would be absent, but probably a week; and what was to become of me in that great hotel there all alone? They protested that it would be quite impossible to leave me; they would have to give up that climb; and I believe they would have done so if what seemed to be a solution of the difficulty had not turned up.

The people in the hotel were for the most part very sociable folk, as people in such places are apt to be. Among other persons whose acquaintance we had made was a middle-aged widow, a Mrs. Hawthorne. When she heard of what Mr. and Mrs. Travers wanted to do, and how they could not do it because of me, she volunteered, during their absence, to occupy their place as my chaperon, assuring them that every possible care should be taken of me.

In the hotel were stopping a brother and sister, a Mr. and Miss Sterndale. With them I had grown quite friendly. Mr. Sterndale I should have set down as twenty-five or twenty-six, and his sister as a year or two younger. From the day on which I had first seen them they had shown an inclination for my society; and, to speak quite frankly, on different occasions Mr. Sterndale had paid me what seemed to me to be delicate little attentions which were very dear to my maiden heart. I had some difficulty in inducing people to treat me as if I were grown up. After a few minutes' conversation even

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perfect strangers would ask me how old I was, and when I told them they were apt to assume an attitude towards me as if I were the merest child, of which I disapproved.

What attracted me to Mr. Sterndale was that, from the very first, he treated me with deference, as if I were at least as old as he was.

On the third day after Mr. and Mrs. Travers had left Mrs. Hawthorne came to me with a long face and a letter in her hand.

"My dear, I cannot tell you how annoyed I am, but I shall have to go to England at once—to-day. And whatever will become of you?"

It seemed that her only sister was dangerously ill, and that she was implored to go to her as soon as she could. Of course, she would have to go. I told her that it did not matter in the least about me; Mr. and Mrs. Travers would be back in a day or two, and now that I knew so many people in the hotel, who were all of them disposed to be friendly, I should be perfectly all right until they came. She must not allow any consideration for me to keep her for a moment from obeying her sister's call. She left for London that afternoon; but, so far from everything being perfectly all right with me after she had gone, the very next day my troubles began.

They began in the morning. I was sitting on the terrace with a book. Mr. Sterndale had been talking to me. Presently his sister came through an open French window from the lounge. Her brother went up to her; I sat still. She was at the other end of the terrace, and when she saw me she nodded and smiled. When her brother came up to her, he said something which, as his back was towards me, of course I did not catch; but her answer to him, which was very gently uttered, I saw quite distinctly; all the while she was speaking she was smiling at me.

"She has a red morocco jewel-case sort of a thing on the corner of her mantel-shelf; I put it under the bottom tray. With the exception of that gold locket which she is always wearing it's the only decent thing in it; it's full of childish trumpery."

That was what Miss Sterndale said to her brother, and I saw her say it with rather curious feelings. What had he asked her? To what could she be referring? I had "a red morocco jewel-case sort of a thing," and it stood on a corner of my mantel-shelf. I also had a gold locket, which, if I was not, as she put it, always wearing, I did wear pretty often. Certainly it was the only article in my jewel-case which was worth very much; and with a horrid sort of qualm I owned to myself that the rest of the contents might come under the definition of "childish trumpery." She said she had put something under the bottom tray. What bottom tray? Whose bottom tray? There were trays in my jewel-case; she could not possibly have meant that she had put anything under one of them. The idea was too preposterous. And yet, if we had not been going to St. Beatenberg I think I should have gone straight up to my bedroom to see. I do not know how it was; the moment before I had been perfectly happy; there was not a grain of suspicion in the air, nor in my mind; then all of a sudden I felt quite curious. Could there be two persons in the house possessed of "a red morocco jewel-case sort of a thing," which stood on a corner of the mantel-shelf, in which was a gold locket and a rather mixed collection of childish trumpery? I wondered.

The evening before we had arranged to make an excursion to St. Beatenberg on the Lake of Thun—five or six of us. I was dressed ready to start when Miss Sterndale came through that French window. She also was ready, and her brother. Presently the others appeared. I was feeling a little confused; I could not think of an excuse which would give me an opportunity of examining my jewel-case. Anyhow, I kept trying to tell myself it was absurd. I wished I could not see what people were saying merely by watching their lips.

My day at St. Beatenberg was spoilt, though I kept telling myself that it was all my own fault, and nobody else's. Everyone was gay, and full of fun and laughter—everyone but me. My mood was so obviously out of tune with theirs that they commented on it.

"What is the matter with you, Miss Lee?" asked Mrs. Dalton; "you look as if you were not enjoying yourself one little bit."

I did not like to say that I was not; as a matter of fact, when they rallied me I said that I was—but it was not true.

When I got back to the hotel and was in my bedroom, I went straight up to that "red morocco jewel-case sort of a thing" and looked at it. It was locked, just as I had left it. Clearly I had been worrying myself all day long about nothing at all. Still, I got my keys and opened it; there was nothing to show that the contents had been touched. I lifted the two trays—and I gasped. I do not know how else to describe it—something seemed all at once to be choking me, so that it was with an effort that I breathed. In the jewel-

case, under the bottom tray, was a pendant—a beautiful circular diamond pendant, of the size, perhaps, of a five-shilling piece. It was not mine; I never had anything so beautiful in my life. Where did it come from? Could Miss Sterndale have put it there? Was that the meaning of her words?

I took the pendant out. It was a beauty; it could not be a present from the Sterndales, from either the sister or the brother. They must have known that I could not accept such a gift as that from strangers. And then, what a queer way of making a present—and such a present!

As I looked at it I began to have a very uncomfortable feeling that I had seen it before, or one very like it, on someone in the house. My head, or my brain, or something, seemed to be so muddled that at the moment I could not think who that someone was. I had washed and tidied myself before I decided that I would go down with the pendant in my hand and, at the risk of no matter what misunderstanding, ask Miss Sterndale what she meant by putting it there. So, when I had got my unruly hair into something like order, downstairs I went, and rushed into the lounge with so much impetuosity that I all but cannoned against Miss Goodridge, who was coming out.

"Good gracious, child!" she exclaimed. "Do look where you are going. You almost knocked me over."

The instant I saw her, and she said that, I remembered—I knew whom I had seen wearing that diamond pendant which I was holding tightly clasped in the palm of my hand. It was the person whom I had almost knocked over, Miss Goodridge herself—of course! One of the persons in the hotel whom, so far as I knew anything of them, I liked least. Miss Goodridge was a tall, angular person of perhaps quite thirty-five, who dressed and carried herself as if she were still a girl. She had been most unpleasant to me. I had no idea what I had done or said to cause her annoyance, but I had a feeling that she disliked me, and was at no pains to conceal the fact. The sight of her, and the thought that I had nearly knocked her over, quite drove the sense out of my head.

"Oh, Miss Goodridge!" I exclaimed, rather fatuously. "You look as if something had happened."

"Something has happened," she replied. "There's a thief in the house. I have been robbed. Someone has stolen my pendant—my diamond pendant."

Someone had stolen her diamond pendant! I do not know if the temperature changed all at once, but I do know that a chill went all over me. Was that the explanation? Could it possibly be—— I did not care to carry even my thought to a logical finish. I stood there as if I were moonstruck, with Miss Goodridge looking at me with angry eyes.

"What is the matter with the child?" she asked. "I did not know you dark-skinned girls could blush, but I declare you've gone as red as a lobster."

I do not know if she thought that lobsters were red before they were boiled. I tried to explain, to say what I wanted to say, but I appeared to be tongue-tied.

"Can't you speak?" she demanded. "Don't glare at me as if you'd committed a murder. Anyone would think that you had been robbed instead of me. I suppose you haven't stolen my pendant?"

She drew her bow at a venture, but her arrow hit the mark.

"Oh, Miss Goodridge!" I repeated. It seemed to be all I could say.

She put her hand upon my shoulder.

"What is the matter with the girl? You young wretch! Have you been playing any tricks with that pendant of mine?"

"I—I found it," I stammered. I held out to her my open hand with the pendant on the palm.

"You—you found it? Found what?" She looked at me and then at my outstretched hand. "My pendant! She's got my pendant!" She snatched it from me. "You—you young—thief! And you have the insolence to pretend you found it!"

"I did find it—I found it in my bedroom."

"Did you really? Of all the assurance! I've always felt that you were the kind of creature with whom the less one had to do the better, but I never credited you with a taste for this sort of thing. Get out of my way! Don't you ever dare to speak to me again."

She did not wait for me to get out of her way; she gave me a violent push and rushed right past me. It was a polished floor; if I had not come in contact with a big arm-chair I should have tumbled on to it. My feelings when I was left alone in the lounge were not enviable. At seventeen, even if one thinks oneself grown up, one is still only a child, and I was a stranger in a strange land, without a friend in all that great hotel, without a soul to advise me. Still, as I knew that I was absolutely and entirely innocent, I did not intend to behave as if I were guilty. I went up to my room again and dressed for

dinner. I told myself over and over again as I performed my simple toilette that I would make Miss Goodridge eat her words before she had done, though at that moment I had not the faintest notion how I was going to do it.

That was a horrid dinner—not from the culinary, but from my point of view. If the dinner was horrid, in the lounge afterwards it was worse. Miss Sterndale actually had the audacity to come up to me and pretend to play the part of sympathetic friend.

"You seem to be all alone," she began. I was all alone; I had never thought that anyone could feel so utterly alone as I did in that crowded lounge. "Miss Lee, why do you look at me like that?" I was looking at her as if I wished her to understand that I was looking into her very soul—if she had one. Her smiling serenity of countenance was incredible to me, knowing what I knew. "Have you had bad news from home, or from Mr. and Mrs. Travers, or are you unhappy because Mrs. Hawthorne has gone? You seem so different. What has been the matter with you the whole of to-day?"

I was on the point of giving an explanation which I think might have startled her when I happened to glance across the room. At a table near the open window, Mr. Sterndale was sitting with Miss Goodridge. They were having coffee. Although Miss Goodridge was sitting sideways, she continually turned her head to watch me. Mr. Sterndale was sitting directly facing me. He had a cigarette in one hand, and every now and then he sipped his coffee, but most of the time he talked. But, although I could not even hear the sound of his voice, I saw what he said as distinctly as if he had been shouting in my ear. It was the sentence he was uttering which caused me to defer the explanation which I had it in my mind to give to his sister.

"Of course, the girl's a thief—I'm afraid that goes without saying." It was that sentence which was issuing from his lips at the moment when I chanced to glance in his direction which caused the explanation I had been about to make to his sister to be deferred.

Miss Goodridge had her coffee-cup up to her mouth, so I could not see what she said; but if I had been put to it I might have made a very shrewd guess by the reply he made. He took his cigarette from his lips, blew out a thin column of smoke, leaned back in his chair—and all the time he was looking smilingly at me with what he meant me to think were the eyes of a friend.

"It's all very well for you to talk. I may have had my suspicions, but it is only within

"GET OUT OF MY WAY! DON'T YOU EVER DARE TO SPEAK TO ME AGAIN."

the last hour or two that they have been confirmed."

She said something which again I could not see; his reply suggested that she must have asked a question.

"I'll tell you what I mean by saying that my doubts have been confirmed. A man was passing through this afternoon with whom I have some acquaintance—the Rector of Leeds." I wonder he did not say the Bishop of London. "He saw—our friend——" He made a slight inclination of his head towards me. "At sight of her he exclaimed: 'Halloa, there's that Burnett girl!' For a parson he has rather a free and easy way of speaking; he's one of your modern kind." I believed him! "'Burnett girl?' I said. 'But her name's Lee—Judith Lee.' 'Oh, she calls herself Lee now, does she? That settles it.' 'Settles what?' I asked, because I saw that there was something in his tone. 'My dear Reggie,' he said (he always calls me Reggie; I've known him for years), 'at the beginning of the season that girl whom you call Judith Lee was at Pontresina, staying in the same hotel as I was. She called herself Burnett then. Robberies were going on all the time, people were continually missing things. At last a Russian woman lost a valuable lot of jewellery. That settled it—Miss Burnett went.'"

Miss Goodridge turned so that her face was hidden; but, as before, his reply gave me a pretty good clue as to the question she had asked.

"Of course I mean it. Do you think I'd say a thing like that if I didn't mean it? I won't tell you all he said—it wouldn't be quite fair. But it came to this. He said that the young lady whom we have all thought so sweet and innocent——"

Miss Goodridge interposed with a remark which, in a guessing competition, I think I could have come pretty near to. He replied:—

"Well, I've sometimes felt that you were rather hard on her, that perhaps you were a trifle prejudiced."

Miss Goodridge turned her face towards me, and then I saw her words.

"I'm a better judge of feminine human nature than you suppose. The first moment I saw her I knew she was a young cat, though I admit I didn't take her to be as bad as she is. What did your clerical friend say of her, of the Miss Burnett whom we know now as Miss Lee?"

I did not wait to learn his answer—I had learnt enough. What his sister thought of my demeanour I did not care; I had been dimly conscious that she had been talking to me all the while, but what she was saying I do not know. My attention had been wholly taken up with what I did not hear. Before he began his reply to Miss Goodridge's genial inquiry I got up from my chair and marched out of the lounge, without saying a word to Miss Sterndale. When I had gone a little way I remembered that I had left my handkerchief—my best lace handkerchief—on the table by which I had been sitting. Even in the midst of my agitation I was conscious that I could not afford to lose it, so went back for it.

Miss Sterndale had joined her brother and Miss Goodridge. Two or three other people were standing by them, evidently interested in what was being said. I found my handkerchief. As I was going off with it Miss Sterndale turned round in my direction, without, however, thinking it worth her while to break off the remark she was making, taking it for granted, of course, that it was inaudible to me. I came in, as it were, for the tail end of it.

". . . I am so disappointed in her; I have tried to like her, and now I fear it is only too certain that she is one of those creatures of whom the less said the better."

That these words referred to me I had not the slightest doubt. Yet, while they were still on her lips, presuming on her conviction that they were hidden from me, she nodded and smiled as if she were wishing me a friendly good-night.

The treachery of it! Now that I am able to look back calmly, I think it was that which galled me most. Her brother, with his gratuitous, horrible lies, had actually been pretending to make love to me—I am sure that was what he wished me to think he was doing. What a fool he must have thought me!

That was a sleepless night. It was hours before I got between the sheets, and when I did it was not to slumber. The feeling that I was so entirely alone, and that there was not a soul within miles and miles to whom I could turn for help, coupled with the consciousness that I had scarcely enough money to pay the hotel bill, and, what was even worse, that Mr. and Mrs. Travers had gone off with the return-half of my ticket to London, so that I could not go back home however much I might want to—these things were hard enough to bear; but they seemed to be as nothing compared to that man and woman's treachery. What was their motive, what could have induced them, was beyond my comprehension. It

was a problem which I strove all night to solve. But the solution came on the morrow.

I soon knew what had happened when I went downstairs. Miss Goodridge had told her story of the pendant, and Mr. Sterndale had circulated his lie about his clerical friend. Everybody shunned me. Some persons had the grace to pretend not to see me; others looked me full in the face and cut me dead. The only persons who were disposed to show any perception of my presence were the Sterndales. As, entering the breakfast-room, I passed their table, they both smiled and nodded, but I showed no consciousness of them. As I took a seat at my own table, I saw him say to his sister:—

"Our young friend seems to have got her back up—little idiot!"

Little idiot, was I? Only yesterday he had called me something else. The feeling that he was saying such things behind my back hurt me more than if he had shouted them to my face. I averted my gaze, keeping my eyes fixed on my plate. I would learn no more of what he said about me, or of what anyone said. I was conscious that life might become unendurable if I were made acquainted with the comments which people were making on me then. Yet, as I sat there with downcast face, might they not construe that as the bearing of a conscience-stricken and guilty wretch? I felt sure that that was what they were doing. But I could not help it; I would not see what they were saying.

Later in the morning matters turned out so that I did see, so that practically I had to see what the Sterndales said to each other. And perhaps, on the whole, it was fortunate for me that I did. I had spent the morning out of doors. On the terrace the Sterndales were standing close together, talking; so engrossed were they by what they were saying that they did not notice me; while, though I did not wish to look at them, something made me. That may seem to be an exaggeration. It is not—it is the truth. My wish was to have nothing more to do with them for ever and ever; but some instinct, which came I know not whence, made me turn my eyes in their direction and see what they were saying. And, as I have already said, it was well for me that I did.

They both seemed to be rather excited. He was speaking quickly and with emphasis.

"I tell you," he was saying, as I paused to watch, "we will do it to-day."

His sister said something which, as she was standing sideways, was lost to me. He replied:—

"The little idiot has cooked her own goose; there's no need for us to waste time in cooking it any more—she's done. I tell you we can strip the house of all it contains, and they'd lock her up for doing it."

Again his sister spoke; without, because of her position, giving herself away to me. He went on again:—

"There are only two things in the house worth having—I could give you a catalogue of what everyone has got. Mrs. Anstruther's diamonds—the necklace is first-rate, and the rest of them aren't bad; and that American woman's pearls. Those five ropes of pearls are worth—I hope they'll be worth a good deal to us. The rest of the things you may make a present of to our young friend. The odium will fall on her—you'll see. We shall be able to depart with the only things worth having, at our distinguished leisure, without a stain upon our characters."

He smiled — some people might have thought it a pleasant smile—to me it seemed a horrid one. That smile finished me—it reminded me of the traitor's kiss. I passed into the house still unnoticed, though I do not suppose that if I had been noticed it would have made any difference to them.

What he meant by what he had said I did not clearly understand. The only thing I quite realized was that he was still making sport of me. I also gathered that that was an amusement which he proposed to continue, though just how I did not see. Nor did I grasp the inner meaning of his allusion to Mrs. Anstruther's diamonds and Mrs. Newball's pearls—no doubt it was Mrs. Newball he meant when he spoke of the American woman. The fine jewels of those two ladies, which they aired at every opportunity, were, as I knew perfectly well, the talk of the whole hotel. Probably that was what they meant they should be. When Mrs. Anstruther had diamonds round her neck and on her bosom and in her ears and hair and round her wrists and on her fingers—I myself had seen her wear diamond rings on all the fingers of both hands and two diamond bracelets on each wrist—she was a sight to be remembered; while Mrs. Newball, with her five strings of splendid pearls, which she sometimes wore all together as a necklace and sometimes twisted as bracelets round her wrists, together with a heterogeneous collection of ornaments of all sorts and kinds, made a pretty good second.

Not a person spoke to me the whole of that day. Everyone avoided me in a most ostentatious manner; and everyone, or nearly

everyone, had been so friendly. It was dreadful. If I had had enough money to pay the hotel bill, as well as the return-half of my ticket home, I believe I should have left Interlaken there and then. But the choice of whether I would go or stay, as it turned out, was not to be left to me.

Depressed, miserable, homesick, devoutly wishing that I had never left home, almost resolved that I would never leave it again, I was about to go up to my room to dress for what I very well knew would only be the ghastly farce of dinner, when, as I reached the lift, a waiter came up to me and said that the manager wished to see me in his office. I did not like the man's manner; it is quite easy for a Swiss waiter to be rude, and I was on the point of telling him that at the moment I was engaged and that the manager would have to wait, when something which I thought I saw in his eye caused me to change my mind, and, with an indefinable sense of discomfort, I allowed him to show me to the managerial sanctum. I never had liked the look of that manager; I liked it less than ever when I found myself alone in his room with him. He was a youngish man, with a moustache, and hair parted mathematically in the centre. In general his bearing was too saccharine to be pleasant; he did not err in that respect just then—it was most offensive. He looked me up and down as if I were one of his employés who had done something wrong, and, without waiting for me to speak, he said:—

"You are Miss Judith Lee—or you pretend that is your name?"

He spoke English very well, as most of the Swiss one meets in hotels seem to do. Nothing could have been more impertinent than his tone, unless it was the look which accompanied it. I stared at him.

"I am Miss Lee. I do not pretend that is my name; it is."

"Very well—that is your affair, not mine. You will no longer be allowed to occupy a room in this hotel. You can go at once."

"What do you mean?" I asked. The man was incredible.

"You know very well what I mean. Don't you try that sort of thing with me. You have stolen an article of jewellery belonging to a guest in my hotel. She is a very kind-hearted lady, and she is not willing to hand you over to the police. You owe me some money; here's your bill. Are you going to pay it?"

He handed me a long strip of paper which was covered with figures. One glance at the total was enough to tell me that I had not enough money. Mrs. Travers was acting as my banker. She had left me with ample funds to serve as pocket-money till she returned, but with nothing like enough money to pay that bill.

"Mrs. Travers will pay you when she comes back, either to-morrow or the day after."

"Will she?" The sneer with which he said it! "How am I to know that you're not at the same game together?"

"The same game! What do you mean? How dare you look at me like that, and talk to me as if I were one of your servants!"

"I'm not going to talk to you at all, my girl; I'm going to do. I'm not going to allow a person who robs my guests to remain in my house under any pretext whatever. Your luggage, such as it is, will remain here until my bill is paid." He rang a bell which was on the table by which he was standing. The waiter entered who had showed me there. He was a big man, with a square, dark face. "This young woman must go at once. If she won't leave of her own accord we must put her out, by the back door. Now, my girl—out you go!"

The waiter approached me. He spoke to me as he might have done to a dog.

"Now, then, come along."

He actually put his hand upon my shoulder. Another second, and I believe he would have swung me round and out of the room. But just as he touched me the door was opened and someone came rushing in—Mrs. Anstruther, in a state of the greatest excitement.

"My diamonds have been stolen!" she cried. "Someone has stolen my diamonds!"

"Your diamonds?" The manager looked at her and then at me. "I trust, madam, you are mistaken?"

"I'm not mistaken." She sank on to a chair. She was a big woman of about fifty, and, at the best of times, was scant of breath. Such was her agitation that just then she could scarcely breathe at all. "As if I could be mistaken about a thing like that! I went up to my bedroom—to dress for dinner—and I unlocked my trunk—I always keep it locked; I took out my jewel-case—and unlocked that—and my diamonds were gone. They've been stolen!—stolen!—stolen!"

She repeated the word "stolen" three times over, as if the heinousness of the fact required to be emphasized by repetition. The manager was evidently uneasy, which even I felt was not to be wondered at.

"This is a very serious matter, Mrs. Anstruther——"

She cut him short.

"'MY DIAMONDS HAVE BEEN STOLEN!' SHE CRIED."

"Serious? Do you think I need you to tell me that it's serious? You don't know how serious. Those diamonds are worth thousands and thousands of pounds—more than the whole of your twopenny-halfpenny hotel—and they've been stolen. From my trunk, in my bedroom, in your hotel, they've been stolen!"

The way she hurled the words at him! He looked at me, and he asked:—

"What do you know about this?"

What did I know? In the midst of my confusion and distress I was asking myself what I did know. Before I could speak the door was opened again and Mrs. Newball came in. And not Mrs. Newball only, but six or seven other women, some of them accompanied by men—their husbands and their brothers. And they all told the same tale. Something had been stolen from each: from Mrs. Newball her five strings of pearls, from Mrs. This and Miss That the article of jewellery which was valued most. I am convinced that that manager, or his room, or probably

his hotel, had never witnessed such a scene before. They were all as excited as could be, and they were all talking at once, and every second or two someone else kept coming in with some fresh tale of a dreadful loss. How that man kept his head at all was, and is, a mystery to me. At last he reduced them to something like silence, and in the presence of them all he said to me—pointing at me with his finger, as if I were a thing to be pointed at :—

"It is you who have done this! You!"

Someone exclaimed in the crowd: "I saw her coming out of Mrs. Anstruther's room."

The manager demanded: "Who spoke? Who was it said that?"

A slight, faded, fair-haired woman came out into the public gaze.

"I am Mrs. Anstruther's maid. I was going along to her room when I saw this young lady come out of the door. Whether she saw me or not I can't say; she might have done, because she ran off as fast as ever she could. I wondered what she was doing there, and when my mistress came I told her what I had seen, and that's what made her open her trunk."

"What Perkins says is quite true," corroborated Mrs. Anstruther. "She did tell me, and that made me uneasy; I had heard something about a diamond pendant having been stolen last night, so I opened my jewel-case, and my diamonds were gone."

"Mine was the diamond pendant which was stolen by this creature last night," interposed Miss Goodridge. "She came to my room and took it out of my trunk. Since she did that it seems not impossible that she has played the same trick on other people to-day. If she has, she must have had a pretty good haul, because I don't believe there is a person in the hotel who hasn't lost something."

The manager spoke to an under-strapper.

"Have this young woman's luggage searched at once, in the presence of witnesses, and let me know the result as soon as you possibly can."

As the under-strapper went out I noticed for the first time that Mr. Sterndale was present with the rest, and almost at the same instant his sister came in. She looked about her as if wondering what was the cause of all the fuss. Then she went up to her brother, and he whispered something to her, and she whispered something to him. Only three or four words in each case, but my heart gave a leap in my bosom—I mean that, really, because it did feel as if it actually had jumped—courage came into me, and strength, and something better than hope: certainty; because they had delivered themselves into my hands. I was never more thankful that I had the power of eavesdropping—you can call it eavesdropping, if you like!—than I was at that moment. Only a second before I had been fearing that I was in a tight place, from which there was no way out; which would mean something for me from which my very soul seemed to shrink. But God had given me a gift, a talent, which I had striven with all my might to improve ten, twenty fold, and that would deliver me from the wiles of those two people, even when hope of deliverance there seemed none. I feel confident that I held myself straighter, that trouble went from my face as it had done from my heart, and that, though each moment the case against me seemed to be growing blacker and blacker, I grew calmer and more self-possessed. I knew I had only to wait till the proper moment came, and the toils in which they thought they had caught me would prove to be mere nothings; they would be caught, and I should be free.

All the same, until that moment for which I was waiting came, it was not nice for me—standing there amidst all those excited people, between two porters, who kept close to either side of me, as if I were a prisoner and they had me in charge; though I dare say it was as well that they did keep as close to me as they did, because I fancy that some of the injured guests at that hotel would have liked to give me a practical demonstration of what their feelings towards me were.

That under-strapper came back in a surprisingly short space of time with a hand-bag—a brown bag, which I recognized to be my own.

The agitated guests crowded round him like a swarm of bees. He had difficulty in forcing his way through them. The manager did his best to keep them in something like order—first with a show of mildness.

"Ladies, gentlemen—gently, gently, if you please." Then, with sudden ferocity: "Stand back, there! If you will not stand back, if you will not make room, how can anything be done? Keep these people back!"

To whom this order was addressed was not quite clear. Thus admonished, the people kept themselves back—at least, sufficiently to enable that under-strapper to pass with my bag to the table. The manager said to him :—

"Go to the other side; what have you in that bag?" When, as he said this, his guests evinced an inclination to press forward,

he threw out his arms on either side of him and positively shouted :—

"Will you not keep back? If you will keep back, everything shall be done in order before you all. I ask you only to be a little sensible. If there is so much confusion, we shall not know what we are doing. I beg of you that you will be calm."

If they were not precisely calm, the people did show some slight inclination to behave with an approach to common sense. They permitted the bag to be placed on the table, and the manager to open it, having first put some questions to the young man who brought it in.

"Where did you find this bag?"

"In her room." I was the "her," which he made clear by pointing his finger straight at me.

"Was anyone else present in the room at the time you found it? Did you find anything else?"

"There were three other persons present in the room. That bag was the first thing I touched. When I opened it and saw what was inside, I thought that, for the present, that would be enough. I think you also will be of my opinion when you see what it contains."

Then the manager opened the bag. He looked inside, then he turned it upside down and allowed the whole contents to fall out on to the table. Of all the extraordinary collections! I believe there were articles belonging to every person in the hotel. When you came to think of it, it was amazing how they had been gathered together—in what could only have been a short space of time—without the gatherer being detected. As for the behaviour of the guests of the hotel, it was like Bedlam broken loose. They pressed forward all together, ejaculating, exclaiming, snatching at this and that, as each saw some personal belonging.

"HE TURNED IT UPSIDE DOWN AND ALLOWED THE WHOLE CONTENTS TO FALL OUT ON TO THE TABLE."

"Keep back! Keep back!" shouted the manager. "Will you not keep back?" As he positively roared at them they did shrink back as if a trifle startled. "If you will only have a little patience each lady shall have what belongs to her—if it is here."

Mrs. Anstruther's voice was heard above the hubbub: "Are my diamonds there?" Then Mrs. Newball's: "And my pearls?"

The under-strapper was examining the miscellaneous collection which my bag had contained with all those women breaking into continual exclamations, watching him with hungry eyes. He announced the result of his examination.

"No; Mrs. Anstruther's diamonds do not appear to be here, nor Mrs. Newball's pearls; there is nothing here which at all resembles them."

The manager held out towards me a minatory finger; everyone seemed to have developed a sudden mania for pointing, particularly at me.

"You! Where have you put Mrs. Newball's pearls and Mrs. Anstruther's diamonds? Better make a clean breast of it, and no longer play the hypocrite. We will find them, if you do not tell us where they are, be sure of it. Now tell us at once."

How he thundered at me! It was most embarrassing, or it would have been if I had not been conscious that I held the key of the situation in my hand. As it was, I minded his thunder scarcely a little bit, though I always have hated being shouted at. I was very calm—certainly the calmest person there—which, of course, was not saying very much.

"I can tell you where they are, if that is what you mean."

"You know that is what I mean. Tell us at once! at once!"

He banged his fist upon the table so that that miscellaneous collection trembled. I did not tremble, though perhaps it was his intention that I should. I was growing calmer and calmer.

"In the first place, let me inform you that if you suppose I put those things in my bag—the bag is certainly mine—or had anything to do with their getting there, you are mistaken."

My words, and perhaps my manner, created a small diversion. "What impudence!" "What assurance!" "Did you ever see anything like it?" "So young and so brazen!" "The impudent baggage!" Those were some of the things which they said, which were very nice for me to have to listen to. But I was sure, from a glimpse I had caught of Mr. and Miss Sterndale, that they were not quite at their ease, and that was such a comfort.

"No lies!" thundered the manager, whose English became a little vulgar. "No foolery! No stuck-up rubbish! Tell us the truth—where are these ladies' jewels?"

"I propose to tell you the truth, if you will have a little patience." I returned him look for look; I was not the least afraid of him. "I am going to give you a little surprise." I was so conscious of that that I was beginning to feel almost amused. "I have a power of which I think none of you have any conception, especially two of you. I know what people are saying although I do not hear them; like the deaf and dumb, who know what a person is saying by merely watching his lips."

There were some very rude interruptions, to which I paid no notice whatever. An elderly man whom I had never seen before, and who spoke with an air of authority, advised them to give me a hearing. They did let me go on.

I told them what I had seen Miss Sterndale say to her brother on the balcony the morning before. It was some satisfaction to see the startled look which came upon the faces of both the brother and the sister. They made some very noisy and uncivil comments, but, as I could see how uncomfortable they were feeling, I let them make them. I went on. I told how unhappy I had been all day, and how, when I returned, I found under the bottom tray of my jewel-case the diamond pendant. How, astounded, I went down to ask Miss Sterndale why she had put it there, and how, encountering Miss Goodridge bewailing her loss, utterly taken aback, I held out to her her pendant in a manner which, I admitted, might very easily have seemed suspicious.

By this time the manager's room was in a delightful state of din. Mr. and Miss Sterndale were both of them shouting together, declaring that it was shocking that such a creature as I was should be allowed to make such monstrous insinuations. I believe, if it had not been for that grey-haired man who had suddenly assumed a position of authority, that Miss Sterndale would have made a personal assault on me. She seemed half beside herself with rage—and, I was quite sure, with something else as well.

I continued—in spite of the Sterndales. I could see that I was creating a state of perplexity in the minds of my hearers which might very shortly induce them to take up an entirely different attitude towards me. I told of the brief dialogue which had taken place between the sister and brother that very morning. And then you should have seen how the Sterndales stormed and raged.

"It seems to me," observed the grey-haired man to Mr. Sterndale, "that you protest too much, sir. If this young lady is all the things you say she is, presently you will have every opportunity of proving it. Since she is one young girl among all us grown-ups, it is only right and decent that we should hear what she has to say for herself. We can condemn her afterwards—that part will be easy."

So I went on again. There was very little to add. They knew almost as much of the rest as I did. Someone had effected a wholesale clearance of pretty nearly every valuable which the house contained. I did not pre-

tend to be certain, but I thought it extremely probable that it was Miss Sterndale who had done this, while her brother kept the owners occupied in other directions. At this point glances were exchanged. I afterwards learned that Mr. Sterndale had organized a party for an excursion on the Lake of Brienz, which had been joined by nearly everyone in the place with the exception of Miss Sterndale, who was supposed to have gone for a solitary expedition up the Schynnige Platte. When Miss Sterndale saw those glances, as I have no doubt she did, she commenced to storm and rage again, and continued to the end. I do not think, even then, she guessed what was coming; but she was already more uncomfortable than she had expected to be, and I could see that her brother felt the same. His face was white and set; he looked like a man who was trying to think of the best way in which to confront a desperate situation.

I went on to explain, quite calmly, that as, owing to the machinations of Mr. Sterndale and his sister, everyone in the house had come to look upon me as a thief, their evident intention was to allow suspicion to be centred on me, and that that was why they put those things in my bag.

"But what were they going to gain by that?" asked the grey-haired man, rather pertinently. His question was echoed in a chorus by the rest—particularly, I noticed, by the Sterndales, who laid emphasis on the transparent absurdity of what I was saying.

"If you will allow me to continue, I will soon make it perfectly clear to you what they were going to gain. If you remember, when Mr. Sterndale was talking to his sister on the balcony this morning, I saw him say to her that there were only two things in the house worth having——"

Here Mr. Sterndale burst into a very hurricane of adjectives. The grey-haired man addressed him with rather unlooked-for vigour.

"Silence, sir! Allow Miss Lee to continue."

Mr. Sterndale was silent. I fancy he was rather cowed by what he saw in the speaker's eyes. I did continue.

"The only two things which, according to Mr. Sterndale, were worth having were Mrs. Anstruther's diamonds and Mrs. Newball's pearls. If they put the whole of the rest of the stolen things into my bag it would be taken for granted that I was the thief, and they would be able to continue in unsuspected possession of the two things which were worth much more than all the rest put together."

The moment I stopped the clamour began again.

"And where do you suggest, young lady," asked the grey-haired man, "that those two articles are?"

"I will tell you." I looked at Miss Sterndale and then at her brother. I believe they would both have liked to have killed and eaten me. They can scarcely have been sure, even then, of what I was going to say, but I could see that they were devoured by anxiety and fear. "I have told you that I can see what people are saying by merely watching their lips. When Miss Sterndale came into the room she whispered something to her brother, in so faint a whisper that her words could have been scarcely audible even to themselves; but I saw their faces, and I knew what they had said as plainly as if they had shouted it. He told her that he had Mrs. Anstruther's diamonds in the pocket of the jacket he has on."

I paused. The first expression on Mr. Sterndale's face was one of blank astonishment. Then he broke into Billingsgate abuse of me.

"You infernal liar! You two-faced cat! You dirty little witch! I'm not going to stay in this room to be insulted by a miserable creature——"

He made for the door. "Stop him!" I cried. As he reached the door it was thrown back almost in his face, and who should come into the room but Mr. and Mrs. Travers. How glad I was to see them! "Stop him!" I cried to Mr. Travers. "Stop that man!" And Mr. Travers stopped him. "Put your hand into the pocket of his jacket and take out what he has there."

Mr. Travers, knowing nothing of what had been taking place, must have been rather at a loss as to what I might mean by such a request; but he did as I told him, all the same. Mr. Sterndale struggled; he did his best to protect himself and his pocket; but he was rather a small man, and Mr. Travers was a giant, both in stature and in strength. In a very few seconds he was staring at the contents of his hand.

"From the look of things, this gentleman's pocket seems to be stuffed with diamonds. Here's a diamond necklace."

He held one up in the air. Heavy weight though she was, I believe that Mrs. Anstruther sprang several inches from the floor.

"It's my necklace!" she screamed.

"And where are my pearls?" demanded Mrs. Newball.

"Miss Sterndale whispered to her brother

that your pearls were inside the bodice of her dress."

The words were scarcely out of my lips before Mrs. Newball sprang at Miss Sterndale, and there ensued a really painful scene. Had she not been restrained, I dare say she would have torn Miss Sterndale's clothes right off her. As it was, someone opened her bodice, and the pearls were produced.

"FROM THE LOOK OF THINGS, THIS GENTLEMAN'S POCKET SEEMS TO BE STUFFED WITH DIAMONDS."

The scene which followed was like pandemonium on a small scale. It seemed as if everyone had gone stark, staring mad. Guests, manager, and staff were all shouting together. I know that Mrs. Travers had her arm round me, and I was happier than—only a few minutes before—I thought that I should ever feel again.

We did not prosecute the Sterndales—which turned out not to be their name, and they were proved not to be sister and brother. Law in Switzerland does not move too quickly; the formalities to be observed are numerous. I did not very much want to have to remain in Switzerland for an indefinite period, at my own expense, to give evidence in a case in which I was not in the faintest degree interested. The others, the guests in the hotel, did not want to do that any more than I did. Their property was restored to them—that was what they wanted. They would have liked to punish the thieves, but not at the cost of so much inconvenience to themselves. So far as we were concerned, the criminals got off scot-free; but, none the less, they did not escape the vengeance of the law. That night they were arrested at Interlaken on another charge. It seemed that they were the perpetrators of that robbery in the hotel at Pontresina which, according to Mr. Sterndale, his apocryphal clerical friend had laid at my door. They had passed there as Mr. and Mrs. Burnett, and were found guilty and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. I have not seen or heard anything of that pseudonymous brother and sister since. I hope I never shall.

To find out what people are saying to each other in confidence, when they suppose themselves to be out of the reach of curious ears, may be very like eavesdropping. If it is, I am very glad that, on various occasions in my life, I have been enabled to be an eavesdropper in that sense. Had I not, at Interlaken, had the power which made of me an eavesdropper, I might have been branded as a criminal, and my happiness, my whole life, have been destroyed for ever.

Buffle-Headed Choctaws.

MR. GRIGGS has retired from his grocery business, and it matters not now to him what spiteful person may call it a chandler's. The little cottage in the country—not too far out, but just far out enough—which had so long been a vision of his dreams, is now a reality—has been so, in fact, for some months. Mr. Griggs's new-found liberty is a sweet and precious thing; but he ran a risk of losing it at the very beginning.

He was seized with the strikingly novel idea of keeping fowls; and, never before having kept anything nearer fowls than the eggs in his shop—which, in fact, were a very long way off, in miles and in time, from the hens who laid them—he sought guidance in handbooks and periodicals. He subscribed to the *Feathered Biped* and the *Scratching-Shed Gazette*, and he plunged with much enthusiasm into the pages of the first issues of those exciting periodicals which came to his hand.

In a more equable frame of mind he would have paused at the prospect opened before him; but he was optimistic and eager, and he only grew more enthusiastic as his original simple vision of half-a-dozen common or back-door yard-scratchers expanded into imaginary mobs of Duckwing Yokohamas, Sebright Bantams, Rhode Island Reds, Croad Langshans, Salmon Faverolles, and Crushed-Strawberry Leghorns. The sole difficulty was to make up his mind which breed to begin with. Meantime, he seized hammer and saw, and acquired board-yielding egg-boxes, nails and wire, hinges and screws.

As a carpenter Mr. Griggs's education was only beginning, and, to confess the fact, it had not gone very far even when his hen-house was complete. But he persevered joyfully, under the placid gaze of Mrs. Griggs, who passed her life of retirement mainly in a sitting position, approving of all her husband did, because it saved trouble. In the end Mr. Griggs's architecture and carpentry stood triumphantly revealed, and he, not without honourable wounds received in the struggle, returned to consideration of breeds.

"Nothing like a really good stock," said Mr. Griggs, dropping the *Barndoor News* and reaching for the *Roosters' Record;* "nothing like a prize stock of a good breed."

"Yes, dear," replied Mrs. Griggs, placidly.

"Costs a bit more to begin with," Mr. Griggs went on, struggling with the voluminous advertisement pages of the *Cock-a-doodle Chronicle*, "but you soon get it all back in prizes and sales of birds. Quite a business it is."

"Yes, dear," repeated Mrs. Griggs, a little doubtfully this time, because she had hoped that they had retired from business.

"'YES, DEAR,' REPLIED MRS. GRIGGS, PLACIDLY."

The married life of Mr. and Mrs. Griggs had remained unclouded throughout, chiefly because of that placid "Yes, dear," of Mrs. Griggs; but now that very phrase, so placable and soothing, threatened storms. When Mr. Griggs suggested Duckwing Yokohamas, Mrs. Griggs said "Yes, dear"; and when he offered the alternative of Salmon Faverolles, she said "Yes, dear," also, not knowing one from the other—nor, in fact, did Mr. Griggs, except for the spelling before his eyes. So he tried again with Silver Campines, and Mrs. Griggs said "Yes, dear," once more; and when he mentioned Blue Wyandottes and got the same reply yet again, Mr. Griggs burst out and accused his spouse of perversity and contradiction. But there is a proverb about the numerical requirements of a quarrel, and the placid Mrs. Griggs refused to form a quorum. In the end, bemused and partly stifled under an accumulation of poultry periodicals, Mr. Griggs sent off an expensive order for a family of Buffle-headed Choctaws—or something with an approximate name—and sank back among the poultry papers once more.

His mind once released from the task of selection, he began to contemplate other cognate matters, and grew more and more impressed with the magnitude of his undertaking. In the advertisement pages of the *Roosters' Record* and the rest he counted four hundred and twenty-seven different special patent foods, deprived of any one of which his birds would perish miserably; one hundred and thirty-eight patent incubators, each better than all the rest, to release from the irksome duty of sitting the patrician hens of whom it would be disrespectful to expect such vulgar devotion; and two hundred and fourteen designs and builds of hen-mansion, each absolutely necessary to save the fancier from the consequences of wanton cruelty to birds; while he wholly lost count of the pills, powders, ointments, and lotions without which his stock must die unanimously.

He found himself vaguely resenting the fact that, notwithstanding all this excitement, Mrs. Griggs was visibly—and audibly—falling asleep in her chair. Could this be called wifely sympathy?

No good leaving it to the railway people to bring the fowls over, Mr. Griggs reflected. So he borrowed a horse and cart in the village and drove to the station to fetch them himself. He had a dim sort of notion that such high-born creatures as prize-bred Buffle-headed Choctaws would expect very different treatment from common fowls, and he felt an uneasy sense of being about to receive distinguished company and not knowing exactly how to behave.

As he approached the station the train came steaming in with unusual fuss and smoke, and loud whistles from the triumphant driver. Plainly this was the train they were coming by—Mr. Griggs was somehow sure of it, without inquiring. These intuitive convictions come to everybody on occasions, and this was one of the occasions. How the

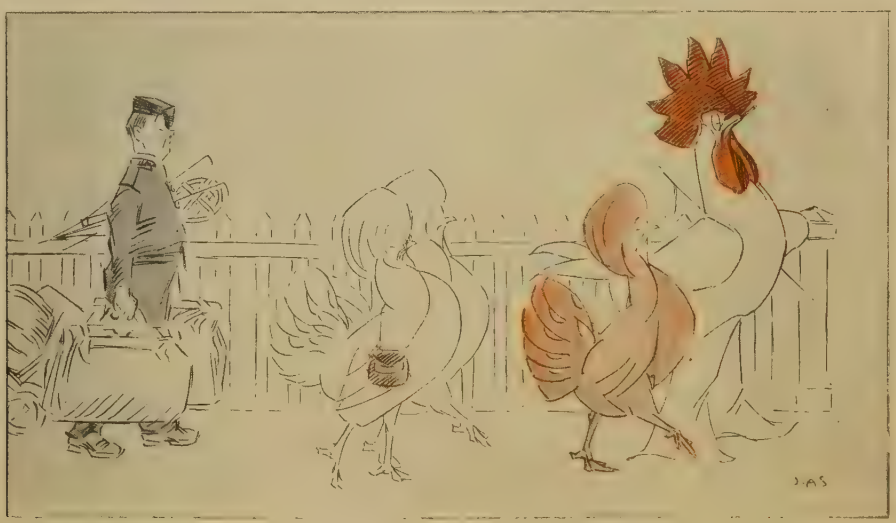
driver whistled! The fussy importance with which the engine steamed and puffed and smoked would have been ridiculous on any less serious occasion, but it was clear that the engine also realized the high responsibility of its task. Mr. Griggs drove up to the station exit and waited, expectant, with many thoughts chasing through his brain. How would his visitors regard Stubbs's somewhat shabby old cart and his elderly horse? And would it not have been more respectful to meet them with a brass band?

An odd human passenger or two came straggling out, to be instantly waved aside by the ticket-collector, and thus to vanish unregarded. Then the visitors appeared, and Mr. Griggs instantly remembered with regret that there was no deputation from the village to read an address. He was not in the least surprised at the size and stateliness of his Buffle-headed Choctaws—for of course they were prize-bred—but he was a good deal flustered and awestruck. He hoped they wouldn't regard him as over-presumptuous in inviting them to so humble a household in so obscure a neighbourhood. Porters walked obsequiously behind the group, bearing portmanteaux and wraps; and the cock paused haughtily at the outer gate, with an audible remark about the car being late.

Poor Mr. Griggs, deplorably ignorant of the etiquette proper to the reception of Buffle-headed Choctaws, coughed and nodded and beckoned uneasily, and was rewarded by a stare of astonished hauteur from his whole group of guests. There were titterings among the hens, and a very audible "Surely not *this* thing?" Mr. Griggs, sadly cast down, found himself apologizing volubly, and laying the whole blame on Stubbs, who had lent him the horse and cart. His apologies were received with haughty indifference, and the hens, gathering their feathers about them disdainfully, stepped into the cart and turned their backs on him.

Mr. Griggs drove home in utter self-abasement, his spirits sinking lower as he went, to the accompaniment of titters and sniffs from behind him. He ought to have known better, he told himself, than to suppose that prize-bred Buffle-headed Choctaws could be treated like mere poultry. Why, he had half expected them to arrive in a crate! He realized bitterly that he was venturing into fashionable society with no proper education, and making himself ridiculous.

Stubbs's horse was a placid and slow beast as a rule, but now he seemed to be impressed, like the locomotive engine, with the eminence of the occasion, and he travelled at an amazing pace, swinging his legs round like wheel-spokes in his furious anxiety to honour the event with the needful flourish. Consequently, Mr. Griggs found himself at home almost as soon as he had left the station-yard.



"THEN THE VISITORS APPEARED."

He was now a little encouraged to perceive something almost like a twinkle in the eye of the cock, as of an amused, superior, though somewhat contemptuous tolerance of his host; but the hens still sniffed and tittered. Mr. Griggs's heart sank very low. Moreover, as he led the way to the shed which had cost

"'MY GOOD MAN,' HE SAID, 'SURELY YOU DON'T EXPECT THE LADIES AND MYSELF TO TAKE UP OUR RESIDENCE IN THAT THING?'"

him such labour and pains—on the thumb-nail—and had been the object of his modest pride so short a time before, he stopped before the door and glanced unhappily—almost guiltily—at the Buffle-headed Choctaws.

But even the half-tolerant cock seemed to regard this as something beyond a joke.

"My good man," he said, "surely you don't expect the ladies and myself to take up our residence in that thing? What is it?"

Poor Mr. Griggs trembled in his shoes, and explained himself out of house and home.

"No, no! Certainly not!" he said. "This is where *I* live. The house isn't—isn't quite ready yet, and I—I was—I had an idea that perhaps you wouldn't mind just waiting here while I see about offering you a little refreshment!"

An enormous saucepan full of savoury scraps had been boiling in the kitchen since the early morning. These Mr. Griggs poured into a deep dish, and carried out with a forced air of genial hospitality.

"Ha, ha!" he cried, with an ingratiating smile. "This'll stick to your ribs! Scraps from the house—all hot!"

"'HA, HA!' HE CRIED. 'THIS'LL STICK TO YOUR RIBS!'"

"AS VALET AND SHOEBLACK HIS TIME WAS PRETTY FULLY OCCUPIED."

"Vulgar creature!" said one hen, turning her back on the dish. "Impossible brute!" said another, shuddering in every feather. And the cock looked so fiercely disgusted that Mr. Griggs began apologizing afresh, laying the whole blame on the cook, and hoping that the cook (who was really only the maid-of-all-work) couldn't hear.

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure," he said, "for her carelessness. It's all a mistake. This is really *my* lunch. Perhaps you'd like a little mayonnaise and cold asparagus, and a few strawberries? I'll—I'll see about it! *Lobster* mayonnaise, of course, not chicken mayonnaise—ha, ha! Hope you don't mind—my little joke—beg pardon! There's some nice lobsters coming on in the greenhouse!"

He hurried off in great perturbation, suddenly realizing that when he had said lobsters he must really have been thinking of tomatoes. Still, the colour was much the same, and, as his visitors had come from the Midlands, perhaps they wouldn't notice the difference.

It was clear that hundreds of things must be done to rearrange the household. The matter that chiefly bothered Mr. Griggs's brain and weighed on his spirits was the impossibility of getting Mrs. Griggs to roost in the hen-house. He could sit on the perch very well himself, but a lady of Mrs. Griggs's size and circumference must roll off every time, it was plain to see. On the other hand, those fastidious Choctaws might reasonably be offended to see such a fat person littering about the house. Plainly she must be concealed. So Mr. Griggs explained the state of affairs to her in the box-room, toppled her backward into a large trunk, and shut down the lid.

"Yes, dear," he heard her say through the keyhole as he hurried off about his duties.

There were a vast number of these duties, he found, as the days went on. All kinds of rare cosmetics were needed to keep the Buffle-headed Choctaws in show condition, and merely as valet and shoeblack his time was pretty fully occupied. Combs had to be oiled with the rarest Macassar, brilliantine was needed for

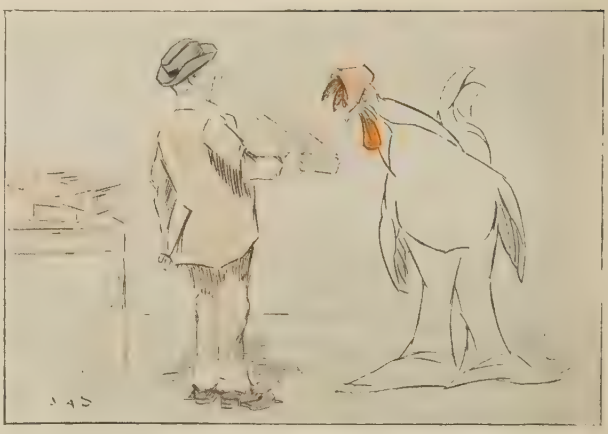
"THE LADIES REQUIRED SUNSHADES TO PROTECT THE COMPLEXION OF THEIR PLUMAGE."

feathers, and the ladies required sunshades to protect the complexion of their plumage; and soon Mr. Griggs was thoroughly broken-in to the duties of shoeblack and chiropodist. His few periods of leisure he spent roosting in the hen-house (which he discovered to be extremely draughty) waiting for orders, while the visitors amused themselves in the drawing-room.

Expenses rose amazingly, too.

"HIS FEW PERIODS OF LEISURE HE SPENT ROOSTING IN THE HEN-HOUSE."

The cock was such a tartar about the quality of his cigars, and the hens were always ordering such quantities of new carpets and curtains to match their complexions, that Mr. Griggs saw the shadow of the Bankruptcy Court hovering over the premises whenever he had time to glance up. The cock read the *Cock-a-doodle Chronicle* regularly, too, and always found some new thing to order in the advertisement pages. Show-time was approaching, it seemed, and if prizes were to be won to stave off that impending bankruptcy—and there was clearly

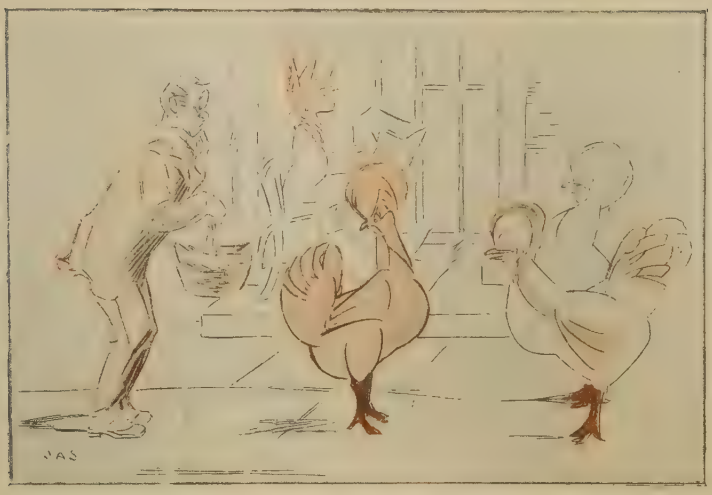


"THE COCK WAS SUCH A TARTAR ABOUT THE QUALITY OF HIS CIGARS."

no other way of doing it—the Buffle-headed Choctaws must be got into condition. Orders for new gymnasiums and dust-baths went in a stream; and, though Mr. Griggs often wondered how Mrs. Griggs was getting on all this time in her trunk, he was far too busy to go and see.

It may not be generally known that prize-bred Buffle-headed Choctaws have all sorts of little ailments that must be treated by Harley Street specialists. Mr. Griggs discovered this soon; and the specialist who came had an extraordinary hand, into which you put any number of guineas one after another, without filling it. His prescriptions, too, were expensive, till at last he handed in one which the chemist refused to dispense, and referred Mr. Griggs elsewhere, when it was discovered that the

"BUFFLE-HEADED CHOCTAWS HAVE ALL SORTS OF LITTLE AILMENTS THAT MUST BE TREATED BY HARLEY STREET SPECIALISTS."



"EGGS? PRIZE-BRED BUFFLE-HEADED CHOCTAWS NEVER LAY EGGS!"

new remedy was a motor-car with plated fittings. And the final blow came when Mr. Griggs was confronted with the bill for that motor-car so prescribed by the specialist for the afternoon airing. Of course, nothing short of a six-cylinder car would do for Buffle-headed Choctaws, and the bill was appalling. Mr. Griggs was more than appalled—he was at the end of his resources. One possibility presented itself, and one only; he must sell some eggs to pay for that motor-car. He seized a basket and approached the hens with timid apologies, laying the whole blame equally on the Harley Street specialist and the inventor of the automobile.

The sight of the basket was enough. The hens joined in one unanimous scream of mocking laughter. The cock joined in also, and somewhere in the distance Stubbs's horse could be heard laughing too.

"Eggs?" came a derisive scream through the laughter. "Eggs? Prize-bred Buffle-headed Choctaws never lay eggs!"

"Why, no, my dear sir," came the voice of the specialist, booming from afar in Harley Street. "*They* never lay eggs!"

And with a loud burst the lid of the big trunk flew open, and Mrs. Griggs emerged. "Yes, dear," she said; "*they* never lay eggs!"

Mr. Griggs started upright in his chair at the words, and the *Cock-a-doodle Chronicle*, the *Roosters' Record*, the *Scratching-Shed Gazette*, and the rest of them slid rustling to the ground. He stared across at Mrs. Griggs where she sat blinking in her chair.

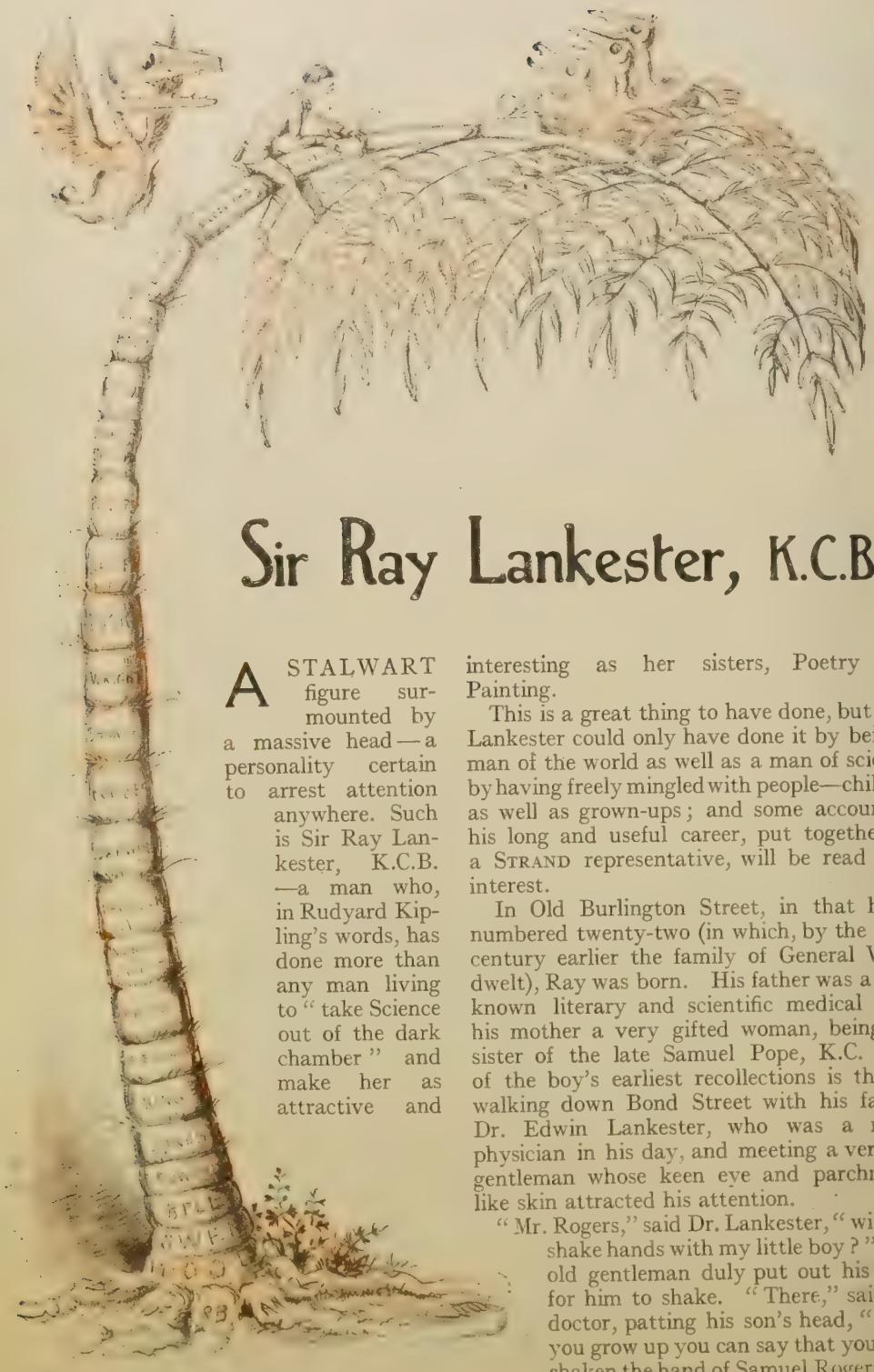
"Maria," said Mr. Griggs, severely, "you've been fast asleep!"

"Yes, dear," replied Mrs. Griggs.

"What I was saying—if you'll only listen," he went on, "is that all this business of poultry-keeping is foolish. We'll buy our eggs as we want 'em!"

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Griggs.

"YES, DEAR."



DESIGN FROM THE ANNIVERSARY DINNER OF THE PALÆOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, 1874.

Sir Ray Lankester, K.C.B.

A STALWART figure surmounted by a massive head—a personality certain to arrest attention anywhere. Such is Sir Ray Lankester, K.C.B.—a man who, in Rudyard Kipling's words, has done more than any man living to "take Science out of the dark chamber" and make her as attractive and interesting as her sisters, Poetry and Painting.

This is a great thing to have done, but Ray Lankester could only have done it by being a man of the world as well as a man of science, by having freely mingled with people—children as well as grown-ups; and some account of his long and useful career, put together by a STRAND representative, will be read with interest.

In Old Burlington Street, in that house numbered twenty-two (in which, by the by, a century earlier the family of General Wolfe dwelt), Ray was born. His father was a well-known literary and scientific medical man, his mother a very gifted woman, being the sister of the late Samuel Pope, K.C. One of the boy's earliest recollections is that of walking down Bond Street with his father, Dr. Edwin Lankester, who was a noted physician in his day, and meeting a very old gentleman whose keen eye and parchment-like skin attracted his attention.

"Mr. Rogers," said Dr. Lankester, "will you shake hands with my little boy?" The old gentleman duly put out his hand for him to shake. "There," said the doctor, patting his son's head, "when you grow up you can say that you have shaken the hand of Samuel Rogers, who shook the hand of Dr. Johnson."

SIR RAY LANKESTER.
Photo. by Beresford, Brompton Road, S.W.

In this fashion Sir Ray may be said to have acquired the "Johnson touch." That that memorable handshake imparted to him any special microbe of intelligence or any mania for learning one will not dare to affirm to people who are already aware of Sir Ray Lankester's firm belief in the influence of heredity.

He lived from childhood in a scientific atmosphere; but so did his three brothers and four sisters, who have never evinced any particular concern for zoology or palæontology. He met at his father's house all, or nearly all, the famous philosophers of the day. Amongst these was Professor Owen, who once took him for a stroll in Richmond Park. Owen suddenly pointed skyward.

"See," said he, "there is the new moon; now, you know, when there is a new moon you must turn all the silver in your pocket for luck."

"But," faltered his companion, "I haven't any silver in my pocket."

Owen laughed.

"Haven't you?" he said, drawing forth a brand-new sixpence; "then put this quickly in your poeket and turn it."

He took his first practical lessons in zoology while he was still in pinafores. His first introduction to the giraffe, whom he was able in more mature years to relate zoologically to an animal of his own naming, the Okapi, was memorable. It was one Sunday afternoon at the Zoo. The first hippopotamus had reached London from Egypt, and, after gazing with the fashionable crowd at the monster, Ray turned at length to rest his eyes on a quadruped of a different species, whose liquid eyes and gracefully-curving neck filled him with a tender regard. This tender regard was reciprocated—at least, in part. He has related how he was wearing a new Leghorn straw hat, with an ornamental bunch of Egyptian wheat and broad pink ribbon, the whole tied under his chin by an elastic band. Suddenly it left his head, and he saw it disappear between the lips of the lovely giraffe. He gazed in fascination as its jaw moved with a slow right and left movement, while a tranquil, kindly expression, indicating a desire for a further supply of Leghorn hat, filled its eyes. In spite of his loss he sympathized with the giraffe; it did not destroy his friendly feelings. Alas! that old stock of Regent's Park giraffes has died out thirty years and more. While they lasted they bred freely and made money for the Society.

It appears that he was a very trustful little boy. He relates in his little book, "From an Easy Chair," that, having been repeatedly assured by grown-up friends of a facetious turn of mind that when salt is placed on a bird's tail the bird becomes so transfixed and dazed that anyone can catch it, he, confiding in this statement, carried a packet of salt into St. James's Park, where his sister and he were taken daily by their nurse. He threw the salt at the sparrows, but in vain. They flew away and escaped a proper sprinkling, so he made up his mind that the method was at fault. Resolved to get a proper amount of salt on their tails, he planned a great experiment. At the west end of the sheet of ornamental water was a kind of creek, eight feet long and three broad. While his sister seduced several

SIR RAY LANKESTER, AGED 17.
From a Photograph.

ducks with offerings of breadcrumbs into this creek, he stood, trembling with excitement, near the entrance, armed with a huge paper bag full of salt. They could not escape him; he poured whole ounces of the powdery condiment on to the tails of the birds, whom he believed to be doomed, as they swam past him back to the open water. But what was his amazement and chagrin—they refused to become transfixed or dazed. They swam on gaily and derisively, uttering loud "quacks" and scattering the salt from their feathers into the water. Nonsense! When his first distress wore off, he felt he had at least proved one thing—the falsity of the received opinion. Either his uncle, his nurse, and several other trusted friends were victims of a delusion, or were themselves the deliberate propagators of error.

This experiment caused Sir Ray unconsciously to adopt, at an early age, the motto of the Royal Society, "Nullius in verba," and initiated him into the practice of trying to find out whether things are or are not as good folks say.

He also met Darwin, who was introduced to him as "the man who rode up a mountain on a tortoise's back"—a description which was sure to fascinate a youngster of seven—and in after years came to know the great scientist and his family well.

SIR RAY LANKESTER AS A CHILD, WITH HIS GRANDFATHER, SAMUEL POPE, FATHER OF SAMUEL POPE, K.C.
Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

Huxley, he tells us, carried him in his arms at Felixstowe on the rocks at low tide in 1851, a year of note, because it was the year of the great Exhibition. Huxley had just come back from the voyage of the *Rattlesnake*, and was teased by his friends as "the man who had been round the world and seen nothing but jelly-fishes."

Of Edward Forbes, founder of the Red Lions, Huxley's predecessor at the Royal School of Mines, who wrote songs and drew amusing pictures and who was a man greatly beloved, Sir Ray treasures many memories. The sketch of a spoonbill in boots, on the next page, was drawn for him by Forbes whilst the boy sat on his knee.

At eleven years old Ray was sent to St. Paul's School, then in St. Paul's Churchyard, and his daily walks to and fro gave him a great experience of London.

The "back room," he tells us—a large room over what had once been a stable—in his father's house, at that time No. 8, Savile Row, gave him an opportunity to teach himself chemistry and the use of the blow-pipe. He worked away at leisure at the microscope, and amassed in the course of time a large collection of skulls, insects, fossils, and minerals. His father, though he always encouraged, never instructed him. They walked together, took excursions together, and the father gave his son books and specimens and helped him in every way—the most gentle, kind, and confidence-inspiring of fathers. Once at Hastings (in 1854) they came across a ditch full of snakes. A glance showed his father that they were of a harmless variety, and he told the boy so; whereupon, never having handled a snake before in his life, he plunged into the ditch and caught one in each hand. If his father had said, "Jump over the cliff; it won't hurt you," he would have done it. In fact, he once did jump at his bidding into the deep water of a swimming-bath before he had learned to swim. His father was close by, and took him up.

Douglas Jerrold, whose wit was always mordant above all other wits, was often at his father's house. Sir Ray recalls a laconic comment of his once upon an extravagant speech by Hepworth Dixon. It was at the time when all England was stirred over Palmer, the poisoner, and the company had

been discussing the question of the man and his guilt. But Hepworth Dixon professed not to be satisfied, and cried:—

"'Really, for my part, I think Palmer a fine fellow—a very fine fellow. I should like to subscribe to a piece of plate for him.'

"'Yes—a coffin plate,' growled Jerrold."

A SKETCH DRAWN BY EDWARD FORBES FOR SIR RAY LANKESTER WHEN A CHILD.

Young Lankester took classical prizes in every class at school, and won cups for sculling and for the long jump in the school athletics. In 1864, at the age of seventeen, he went to Downing College, Cambridge, with a scholarship. After a year and a half at Cambridge he migrated to Oxford, becoming a junior student at Christ Church, and afterwards winning the Burdett-Coutts Scholarship and the Radcliffe Travelling Fellowship.

During his later Oxford days he visited town frequently, and on one occasion was taken very ill at rooms in Hertford Street, Mayfair—so ill that he could not be moved. It so happened that the Baroness Burdett-Coutts—whose scholarship he had won—heard of his illness and insisted on sending him dinner every day during his convalescence from her own table. A tall, powdered footman arrived at young Lankester's lodgings every evening with bowls and silver dishes containing the most tempting delicacies likely to lure the appetite of an invalid.

When at twenty-four Ray Lankester found himself at Naples his zoological tastes were strongly developed, and his studies there of marine fauna were of the utmost value to him. Scientific men at Naples used to engage certain fishermen to assist them in collecting specimens.

Lankester's pet fisherman was quite a character in his way. His name was Giovanni di Giovanni, an old rascal if ever there was one, but he knew hundreds of sea-beasts and where to get them. "Nova specie, signore," he would gravely assert, as he produced a sea-worm or a jelly-fish in one of the glass jars he used to steal from his employer. And sure enough it was a new species. His invariable practice was to bring one jar and take away two daily, until Lankester's stock was exhausted.

On his return from Italy Sir Ray was elected to a Fellowship at Exeter College, lecturing there until his appointment as Professor of Zoology at University College, London, a post he did not relinquish until 1889, when he returned to Oxford as Linacre Professor of Comparative Anatomy. He gave up his professorship nine years later (in 1898), when he was appointed Director of the Natural History Museum in London.

It was in the early days of his London professorship that his famous exposure of Slade, the medium, occurred, with the subsequent Lankester-Slade trial. On September 16th, 1876, within a few days of the British Association meeting, there

QUITE UNIQUE; OR, WELCOMING THE DIPLODOCUS CARNEGII.

PROF. R-y L-NK-ST-R: "Dear me! Most remarkable animal! You are very welcome."

The Diplodocus (enthusiastically): "Wal! If he ain't a daisy! Quite 'n interesting specimen of the British Pro-fessor! Carnegie 'll just have to send a cast o' him over to the States right away!"

Reproduced by kind permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

appeared in the *Times* a letter from Professor Ray Lankester, setting forth the results of a visit which he, in company with Dr. Donkin, had paid to Slade the previous day. Having satisfied himself at a previous visit, by close observation of Slade's movements and general demeanour, that the medium wrote the messages with his own hand upon the slate whilst it was being held under the table, Professor Lankester put his hypothesis to the test by snatching the slate out of Slade's hand before the pretended sound of writing was heard, at a time when, presumably, therefore, the spirits had not begun to write. As he anticipated, he found the message already written. To an observer in Professor Lankester's position the demonstration of fraud left nothing to be desired. He had seen the movements of Slade's arm in the act of writing, and had found the writing so produced where and when no writing should have been.

The incident had a disastrous sequel for Dr. Slade. Professor Lankester obtained a summons against him for unlawfully using subtle craft to deceive certain persons—namely, himself and other gentlemen. After a hearing which lasted for several days, Slade was found guilty and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. He appealed against the sentence. When the appeal was heard, on June 29th, 1877, the magistrate's decision was defended by Mr. Staveley Hill, Q.C., acting for the Treasury. The conviction was, however, quashed at the outset, on the ground that the words "by palmistry or otherwise," which appeared in the statute, had been omitted. Slade at once left the country, and the fresh summons which was issued at the instance of Professor Lankester on the following day was effectual in preventing him from ever returning.

MR. FRANK BALFOUR, WHO WAS KILLED IN THE ALPS, BROTHER OF MR. ARTHUR BALFOUR, AND A GREAT FRIEND OF SIR RAY LANKESTER.

Photo. by Francis Elwell.

One of Sir Ray's dearest friends was Frank Balfour, brother of the Conservative statesman, whose tragic death in the Alps was a great shock to his friend. One year he and Balfour were travelling in Sicily from Girgenti to Palermo, when the diligence was attacked by brigands and the patrol who accompanied it was shot dead on the road.

In the middle 'seventies, being in Paris, Sir Ray went with a medical friend to see the great physician, Charcot, at the Salpêtrière Hospital. At that time some interesting experiments in hypnotism were in vogue, and there were many people who expressed their belief that a small disc of gold, copper, or silver, laid flat on the arm, could produce a total absence of sensation in that member. Each person had a "sympathy" or special affinity for a particular metal, and proofs of the theory were supposed to be forthcoming in the experiments made on nervous patients at the Salpêtrière. Charcot had found that, when a susceptible female patient held in her hand a bar of iron connected with a battery, and an electric current converted the bar of iron into a magnet, the hand and arm of the woman holding the bar lost all sensation. You could thrust large carpet-needles into it, when, under non-magnetic conditions, she shrank from a mere pin-prick. Thus the old theory of the influence of a magnet on the human body was revived. Lankester went and saw this experiment with Charcot and some others present. One thing struck him forcibly: that the order to an assistant to "make contact"—*i.e.*, to magnetize the bar of iron—was pronounced very emphatically by Charcot, and that there immediately followed an attitude of expectancy on the part of the company.

He drew his own conclusions, and when Charcot left the room, saying he would repeat the experiment before a medical audience in an hour or so, and he and his companion found themselves alone, he examined the battery. In an instant he had emptied out the fluid contents (potassium bi-chromate) and poured in pure water instead. Charcot returned with his friends and the patient, and the experiment recommenced. The patient was as sensitive as usual until the moment when the magic word "Make!" was uttered, the current supposed to be set going, and the bar to be magnetized. Then the arm became impervious to sensation. They ran large needles into it and she felt nothing. All at once the order was given to disconnect the current and the patient's sensations to return, and she turned towards Charcot to remonstrate indignantly. Yet all this time there was nothing but water in the battery, and therefore no magnetization of the bar! Sir Ray's suspicions were confirmed. The whole thing was the result of hypnotic "suggestion."

He felt bound to reveal his secret to Charcot and his audience. What would the great

man say when he found he had been thus deceived? Sir Ray had demonstrated that the magnet had nothing to do with the result; it was only a question of the patient's believing that sensation must certainly disappear from her arm when the bar she held became magnetized. He proceeded to explain to Charcot that there was no electric current, because he had substituted water in the battery. As the astonished assistants flew to the battery to verify his statement, he thought for a moment that he would be coldly ordered off the premises. But almost immediately he found one hand of the great physician on his shoulder and another grasping his hand.

"Mais, cher monsieur," cried Charcot, "que vous avez bien fait!"

Amongst the many eminent men Sir Ray has met was Mr. Gladstone. Once at the table of Sir James Knowles the talk ran on the relative physical and mental value of women. Turning to Sir Ray the aged Prime Minister said: "I am of opinion that the relative value of a man and a woman is in all classes of society about the same as it was in my grandfather's time in Jamaica. When they wanted to buy a negro they gave one hundred and twenty pounds for a man and eighty pounds for a woman, and," he added, "that is a fair measure of their relative values the world over."*

Speaking of visitors to the Natural History Museum, Sir Ray tells us that he once acted as cicerone to a wealthy banker. Passing from collection to collection and showcase to showcase, the banker turned to Sir Ray and said, "It's all very fine—very wonderful indeed; but what's it all for? Where does the money come in? Why does the Government spend money on these things if it don't lead to making money?"

The addition to the Museum which perhaps created the most stir—certainly it was the most popular—during Sir Ray's tenure of office was the "Diplodocus." For a time the Diplodocus was in everyone's mouth. One heard references to it in Parliament and in the music-hall. It was not really a Diplodocus that had arrived, but a life-size reproduction of the skeleton of that monster Dinosaurian reptile, found in America, and presented to the British Museum by Mr. Andrew Carnegie in May, 1905.

The number of pets, tiny dogs, kittens, and even tortoises which have been named after Sir Ray by their youthful owners is quite amusing. Most of the little boys at one of the lectures at the Royal Institution (the Christmas Juvenile Course) ventured to bring their birthday books and beg him to inscribe his name therein. A crowd of bullet-headed little boys clustered round him like a swarm of bees, whilst the learned gentlemen of the committee in the front rows were anxiously waiting to get a word with him. "A regular old brick!" was the comment overheard as the delighted schoolboys pushed and hustled each other down the staircase of that most time-honoured and solemn scientific institution.

* It is interesting to note that our article in the April number on the "Athletic Records of Men and Women" shows an exactly similar result to Mr. Gladstone's estimate—*i.e.*, that men are about half as good again as women.

THE SKELETON OF THE DIPLODOCUS IN THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.
From a Photo. by Henry G. Herring.

GOOD INTENTIONS

BY

W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

"JEALOUSY; that's wot it is," said the night-watchman, trying to sneer—"pure jealousy."

He had left his broom for a hurried half-pint at the Bull's Head—left it leaning in a negligent attitude against the warehouse-wall; now, lashed to the top of the crane at the jetty end, it pointed its soiled bristles towards the evening sky and defied capture.

And I know who it is, and why 'e's done it, he continued. Fust and last, I don't suppose I was talking to the gal for more than ten minutes, and arf of that was about the weather.

I don't suppose anybody 'as suffered more from jealousy than wot I 'ave. Other people's jealousy, I mean. Ever since I was married the missis has been setting traps for me, and asking people to keep an eye on me. I blacked one of the eyes once—like a fool—and the chap it belonged to made up a tale about me that I ain't lived down yet.

Years ago, when I was out with the missis one evening, I saved a gal's life for her. She slipped as she was getting off a bus, and I caught 'er just in time. Fine, strapping gal she was, and afore I could get my balance we 'ad danced round and round arf-way acrost the road, with our arms round each other's necks, and my missis watching us from the pavement. When we were safe, she said the gal 'adn't slipped at all; and, as soon as the gal 'ad got 'er breath, I'm blest if she didn't say so too.

You can't argufy with jealous people, and you can't shame 'em. When I told my missis once that I should never dream of being jealous of *her*, instead of up and thanking me for it, she spoilt the best frying-pan we ever had. When the widder-woman next-

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door but two and me 'ad rheumatics at the same time, she went and asked the doctor whether it was catching.

The worst trouble o' that kind I ever got into was all through trying to do somebody else a kindness. I went out o' my way to do it; I wasted the whole evening for the sake of other people, and got into such trouble over it that even now it gives me the cold shivers to think of.

Cap'n Tarbell was the man I tried to do a good turn to; a man that used to be master of a ketch called the *Lizzie and Annie*, trading between 'ere and Shoremouth. "Artful Jack" he used to be called, and if ever a man deserved the name, he did. A widder-man of about fifty, and as silly as a boy of fifteen. He 'ad been talking of getting married agin for over ten years, and, thinking it was only talk, I didn't give 'im any good advice. Then he told me one night that 'e was keeping company with a woman named Lamb, who lived at a place near Shoremouth. When I asked 'im wot she looked like, he said that she had a good 'art, and, knowing wot that meant, I wasn't at all surprised when he told me some time arter that 'e had been a silly fool.

"Well, if she's got a good 'art," I ses, "p'r'aps she'll let you go."

"Talk sense," he ses. "It ain't good enough for that. Why, she worships the ground I tread on. She thinks there is nobody like me in the whole wide world."

"Let's 'ope she'll think so arter you're married," I ses, trying to cheer him up.

"I'm not going to get married," he ses. "Leastways, not to 'er. But 'ow to get out of it without breaking her 'art and being had up for breach o' promise I can't think. And if the other one got to 'ear of it, I should lose her too."

"Other one?" I ses. "Wot other one?"

Cap'n Tarbell shook his 'ead and smiled like a silly gal.

"She fell in love with me on top of a bus in the Mile End Road," he ses. "Love at fust sight it was. She's a widder-lady with a nice little 'ouse at Bow, and plenty to live on—her 'usband having been a builder. I don't know what to do. You see, if I married both of 'em, it's sure to be found out sooner or later."

"You'll be found out as it is," I ses, "if you ain't careful. I'm surprised at you."

"Yes," he ses, getting up and walking backwards and forwards; "especially as Mrs. Plimmer is always talking about coming down to see the ship. One thing is, the crew won't give me away; they've been with me too long for that. P'r'aps you could give me a little advice, Bill."

I did. I talked to that man for an hour and a arf, and when I 'ad finished he said he didn't want that kind of advice at all. Wot 'e wanted was for me to tell 'im 'ow to get rid of Miss Lamb and marry Mrs. Plimmer without anybody being offended or having their feelings hurt.

Mrs. Plimmer came down to the ship the very next evening. Fine-looking woman she was, and, wot with 'er watch and chain and di'mond rings and brooches and such-like, I should think she must 'ave 'ad five or six pounds' worth of jewellery on 'er. She gave me a very pleasant smile, and I gave 'er one back, and we stood chatting there like old friends till at last she tore 'erself away and went on board the ship.

She came off by and by hanging on Cap'n Tarbell's arm. The cap'n was dressed up in 'is Sunday clothes, with one of the cleanest collars on I 'ave ever seen in my life, and smoking a cigar that smelt like an escape of gas. He came back alone at ha'-past eleven that night, and 'e told me that if it wasn't for the other one down Shoremouth way he should be the 'appiest man on earth.

"Mrs. Plimmer's only got one fault," he ses, shaking his 'ead, "and that's jealousy. If she got to know of Laura Lamb, it would be all U P. It makes me go cold all over when I think of it. The only thing is to get married as quick as I can; then she can't help 'erself."

"It wouldn't prevent the other one making a fuss," I ses.

"No," he ses, very thoughtfully, "it wouldn't. I shall 'ave to do something there, but wot, I don't know."

He climbed on board like a man with a load on his mind, and arter a look at the sky went below and forgot both 'is troubles in sleep.

Mrs. Plimmer came down to the wharf every time the ship was up, arter that. Sometimes she'd spend the evening aboard, and sometimes they'd go off and spend it somewhere else. She 'ad a fancy for the cabin, I think, and the cap'n told me that she 'ad said when they were married she was going to sail with 'im sometimes.

"But it ain't for six months yet," he ses, "and a lot o' things might 'appen to the other in that time; with luck."

It was just about a month arter that that 'e came to me one evening trembling all over. I 'ad just come on dooty, and afore I could ask 'im wot was the matter he 'ad got me in the

Bull's Head and stood me three arf-pints, one arter the other.

"I'm ruined," he ses, in a 'usky whisper; "I'm done for. Why was wimmen made? Wot good are they? Fancy 'ow bright and 'appy we should all be without 'em."

I started to p'int things out to 'im that he seemed to 'ave forgot, but 'e wouldn't listen. He was so excited that he didn't seem when he 'ad done, in a desprit way, and 'im and the landlord 'ad a little breeze then that did 'im more good than wot the beer 'ad. When we came outside 'e seemed more contented with 'imself, but he shook his 'ead and was miserable when we got to the wharf agin.

"S'pose they both come along at the same time," he ses. "Wot's to be done?"

"WHY WAS WIMMEN MADE? WOT GOOD ARE THEY?"

to know wot 'e was doing, and arter he 'ad got three more arf-pints waiting for me, all in a row on the counter, I 'ad to ask 'im whether he thought I was there to do conjuring tricks, or wot?

"There was a letter waiting for me in the office," he ses. "From Miss Lamb—she's in London. She's coming to pay me a surprise visit this evening. I know who'll get the surprise. Mrs. Plimmer's coming, too."

I gave 'im one of my arf-pints and made 'im drink it. He chucked the pot on the floor

I shut the gate with a bang and fastened it. Then I turned to 'im with a smile.

"I'm watchman 'ere," I ses, "and I lets in who I thinks I will. This ain't a public 'ighway," I ses; "it's a wharf."

"Bill," he ses, "you're a genius."

"If Miss Lamb comes *'ere* asking arter you," I ses, "I shall say you've gone out for the evening."

"Wot about her letter?" he ses.

"You didn't 'ave it," I ses, winking at 'im.

"And suppose she waits about outside for

me, and Mrs. Plimmer wants me to take 'er out?" he ses, shivering. "She's a fearful obstinate woman; and she'd wait a week for me."

He kept peeping up the road while we talked it over, and then we both see Mrs. Plimmer coming along. He backed on to the wharf and pulled out 'is purse.

"Bill," he ses, gabbling as fast as 'e could gabble, "here's five or six shillings. If the other one comes and won't go away, tell 'er I've gone to the Pagoda Music-'all, and you'll take 'er to me. Keep 'er out all the evening some'ow, if you can. If she comes back too soon, keep 'er in the office.

"And wot about leaving the wharf and my dooty?" I ses, staring.

"I'll put Joe on to keep watch," he ses, pressing the money in my 'and. "I rely on you, Bill, and I'll never forget you. You won't lose by it, trust me."

He nipped off and tumbled aboard the ship afore I could say a word. I just stood there staring arter 'im and feeling the money, and afore I could make up my mind Mrs. Plimmer came up.

I thought I should never ha' got rid of 'er. She stood there chatting and smiling, and seemed to forget all about the cap'n, and every moment I was afraid that the other one might come up. At last she went off, looking behind 'er, to the ship, and then I went outside and put my back up agin the gate and waited.

I 'ad hardly been there ten minutes afore the other one came along. I saw 'er stop and speak to a policeman, and then she came straight over to me.

"I want to see Cap'n Tarbell," she ses.

"Cap'n Tarbell?" I ses, very slow; "Cap'n Tarbell 'as gone off for the evening."

"Gone off!" she ses, staring. "But he can't 'ave. Are you sure?"

"Sartain," I ses. Then I 'ad a bright idea. "And there's a letter come for 'im," I ses.

"Oh, dear!" she ses. "And I thought it would be in plenty of time. Well, I must go on the ship and wait for 'im, I suppose."

If I 'ad only let 'er go I should ha' saved myself a lot o' trouble, and the man wot deserved it would ha' got it. Instead o' that I told 'er about the music-'all, and arter carrying on like a silly gal o' seventeen and saying she couldn't think of it, she gave way and said she'd go with me to find 'im. I was all right so far as clothes went, as it happened, Mrs. Plimmer said once that I got more and more dressy every time she saw me, and my missis 'ad said the same thing, only in a different way. I just took a peep through the gate and saw that Joe 'ad taken up my dooty, and then we set off.

I said I wasn't quite sure which one he'd gone to, but we'd try the Pagoda Music-'all fust, and we went there on a bus from Aldgate. It was the fust evening out I 'ad 'ad for years, and I should 'ave enjoyed it if it 'adn't been for Miss Lamb. Wotever Cap'n Tarbell could ha' seen in 'er, I can't think. She was quiet, and stupid, and bad-tempered. When the bus-conductor came round for the fares she 'adn't got any change; and when we got to the hall she did such eggstrordinary things trying to find 'er pocket that I tried to look as if she didn't belong to me. When she left off she smiled and said she was farther off than ever, and arter three or four wot was standing there 'ad begged 'er to have another try, I 'ad to pay for the two.

The 'ouse was pretty full when we got in, but she didn't take no notice of that. Her idea was that she could walk about all over the place looking for Cap'n Tarbell, and it took three men in buttons and a policeman to persuade 'er different. We were pushed into a couple o' seats at last, and then she started finding fault with me.

"Where is Cap'n Tarbell?" she ses. "Why don't you find him?"

"I'll go and look for 'im in the bar presently," I ses. "He's sure to be there, arter a turn or two."

I managed to keep 'er quiet for arf an hour—with the 'elp of the people wot sat near us—and then I 'ad to go. I 'ad a glass o' beer to pass the time away, and, while I was drinking it, who should come up but the cook and one of the hands from the *Lizzie and Annie*.

"We saw you," ses the cook, winking; "didn't we, Bob?"

"Yes," ses Bob, shaking his silly 'ead; "but it wasn't no surprise to me. I've 'ad my eye on 'im for a long time past."

"I thought 'e was married," ses the cook.

"So he is," ses Bob, "and to the best wife in London. I know where she lives. Mine's a bottle o' Bass," he ses, turning to me.

"So's mine," ses the cook.

I paid for two bottles for 'em, and arter that they said that they'd 'ave a whisky and soda apiece just to show as there was no ill-feeling.

"It's very good," ses Bob, sipping his, "but it wants a sixpenny cigar to go with it. It's been the dream o' my life to smoke a sixpenny cigar."

"So it 'as mine," ses the cook; "but I don't suppose I ever shall."

They both coughed arter that, and like a good-natured fool I stood 'em a sixpenny cigar apiece, and I 'ad just turned to go back to my seat when up come two more hands from the *Lizzie and Annie*.

"Halloa, watchman!" ses one of 'em. "Why, I thought you was a-taking care of the wharf!"

"He's got something better than the wharf to take care of," ses Bob, grinning.

"I know; we see 'im," ses the other chap. However, when we got there I persuaded 'er to go into the office while I went aboard to see if I could find out where he was, and three minutes arterwards he was standing with me behind the galley, trembling all over and patting me on the back.

"Keep 'er in the office a little longer," he ses, in a whisper. "The other's going soon. Keep 'er there as long as you can."

"And suppose she sees you and Mrs. Plimmer passing the window?" I ses.

"SHE WALKED OUT WITH HER 'EAD IN THE AIR, FOLLERED BY ME WITH TWO MEN IN BUTTONS AND A POLICEMAN."

"We've been watching 'is goings-on for the last arf-hour."

I stopped *their* mouths with a glass o' bitter each, and went back to my seat while they was drinking it. I told Miss Lamb in whispers that 'e wasn't there, but I'd 'ave another look for him by and by. If she'd ha' whispered back it would ha' been all right, but she wouldn't, and, arter a most unpleasant scene, she walked out with her 'ead in the air, follered by me with two men in buttons and a policeman.

O' course, nothing would do but she must go back to the wharf and wait for Cap'n Tarbell, and all the way there I was wondering wot would 'appen if she went on board and found 'im there with Mrs. Plimmer.

"That'll be all right. I'm going to take 'er to the stairs in the ship's boat," he ses. "It's more romantic."

He gave me a little punch in the ribs, playful-like, and, arter telling me I was worth my weight in gold-dust, went back to the cabin agin.

I told Miss Lamb that the cabin was locked up, but that Cap'n Tarbell was expected back in about arf an hour's time. Then I found 'er an old newspaper and a comfortable chair and sat down to wait. I couldn't go on the wharf for fear she'd want to come with me, and I sat there as patient as I could, till a little clicking noise made us both start up and look at each other.

"Wot's that?" she ses, listening.

"It sounded," I ses—"it sounded like somebody locking the door."

I went to the door to try it just as somebody dashed past the window with their 'ead down. It was locked fast, and arter I had 'ad a try at it and Miss Lamb had 'ad a try at it, we stood and looked at each other in surprise.

"Somebody's playing a joke on us," I ses.

"Joke!" ses Miss Lamb. "Open that door at once. If you don't open it I'll call for the police."

She looked at the windows, but the iron bars wot was strong enough to keep the vans outside was strong enough to keep 'er in, and then she gave way to such a fit o' temper that I couldn't do nothing with 'er.

"Cap'n Tarbell can't be long now," I ses, as soon as I could get a word in. "We shall get out as soon as 'e comes."

She flung 'erself down in the chair agin with 'er back to me, and for nearly three-quarters of an hour we sat there without a word. Then, to our joy, we 'eard footsteps turn in at the gate. Quick footsteps they was. Somebody turned the handle of the door, and then a face looked in at the window that made me nearly jump out of my boots in surprise. A face that was as white as chalk with temper, and a bonnet cocked over one eye with walking fast. She shook 'er fist at me, and then she shook it at Miss Lamb.

"Who's that?" ses Miss Lamb.

"My missis," I ses, in a loud voice. "Thank goodness she's come!"

"*Open the door!*" ses my missis, with a scream. "OPEN THE DOOR!"

"I can't," I ses. "Somebody's locked it. This is Cap'n Tarbell's young lady."

"I'll Cap'n Tarbell 'er when I get in!" ses my wife. "You too. I'll music-'all you! I'll learn you to go gallivanting about! OPEN THE DOOR!"

She walked up and down the alley-way in front of the window waiting for me like a lion walking up and down its cage waiting for its dinner, and I made up my mind then and there that I should 'ave to make a clean breast of it and let Cap'n Tarbell get out of it the best way he could. I wasn't going to suffer for him.

'Ow long my missis walked up and down there I don't know. It seemed ages to me; but at last I 'eard footsteps and voices, and Bob and the cook and the other two chaps wot we 'ad met at the music-'all came along and stood grinning in at the window.

"Somebody's locked us in," I ses. "Go and fetch Cap'n Tarbell."

"Cap'n Tarbell?" ses the cook. "You don't want to see 'im. Why, he's the last man in the world you ought to want to see! You don't know 'ow jealous he is."

"You go and fetch 'im," I ses. "'Ow dare you talk like that afore my wife!"

"I dursen't take the responserbility," ses the cook. "It might mean bloodshed."

"You go and fetch 'im," ses my missis. "Never mind about the bloodshed. I don't. *Open the door!*"

She started banging on the door agin, and arter talking among themselves for a time they moved off to the ship. They came back in three or four minutes, and the cook 'eld up something in front of the window.

"The boy 'ad got it," he ses. "Now, shall I open the door and let your missis in, or would you rather stay where you are in peace and quietness?"

I saw my missis jump at the key, and Bob and the others, laughing fit to split their sides, 'olding her back. Then I 'eard a shout, and the next moment Cap'n Tarbell came up and asked 'em wot the trouble was about.

They all started talking at once, and then the cap'n, arter one look in at the window, threw up his 'ands and staggered back as if 'e couldn't believe his eyesight. He stood dazed-like for a second or two, and then 'e took the key out of the cook's 'and, opened the door, and walked in. The four men was close be'ind 'im, and, do all she could, my missis couldn't get in front of 'em.

"Watchman!" he ses, in a stuck-up voice. "wot does this mean? Laura Lamb! wot 'ave you got to say for yourself? Where 'ave you been all the evening?"

"She's been to a music-'all with Bill," ses the cook. "We saw 'em."

"WOT?" ses the cap'n, falling back agin. "It can't be!"

"It was them," ses my wife. "A little boy brought me a note telling me. You let me go; it's my 'usband, and I want to talk to 'im."

"It's all right," I ses, waving my 'and at Miss Lamb, wot was going to speak, and smiling at my missis, wot was trying to get at me.

"We went to look for you," ses Miss Lamb, very quick. "He said you were at the music-'all, and as you 'adn't got my letter I thought it was very likely."

"But I did get your letter," ses the cap'n.

"He said you didn't," ses Miss Lamb.

"Look 'ere," I ses. "Why don't you keep quiet and let me explain? I can explain everything."

"I'm glad o' that, for your sake, my man,"

ses the cap'n, looking at me very hard. "I 'ope you will be able to explain 'ow it was you *came to leave the wharf for three hours.*"

I saw it all then. If I split about Mrs. Plimmer, he'd split to the guv'nor about my leaving my dooty, and I should get the sack. I thought I should ha' choked, and, judging by the way they banged me on the back, Bob and the cook thought so too. They 'elped me to a chair when I got better, and I sat there 'elpless while the cap'n went on talking.

"I'm no mischief-maker," he ses; "and, besides, p'r'aps he's been punished enough. And as far as I'm concerned he can take this lady to a music-'all every night of the week if 'e likes."

There was an eggstrordinary noise from where my missis was standing, like the gurgling water makes sometimes running down the kitchen sink at 'ome, only worse. Then they all started talking together, and arf-a-dozen times or more Miss Lamb called me to back 'er up in wot she was saying, but I only shook my 'ead, and at last, arter tossing her 'ead at Cap'n Tarbell and telling 'im she wouldn't 'ave 'im if he'd got fifty million a year, the five of 'em 'eld my missis while she went off.

They gave 'er ten minutes' start, and then Cap'n Tarbell, arter looking at me and shaking his 'ead, said he was afraid they must be going.

"And I 'ope this night'll be a lesson to you," he ses. "Don't neglect your dooty agin. I shall keep my eye on you, and if you be'ave yourself I sha'n't say anything. Why, for all you knew, the wharf might ha' been burnt to the ground while you was away!"

He nodded to his crew, and they all walked out and left me alone—with the missis.

"AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED HE CAN TAKE THIS LADY TO A MUSIC-'ALL EVERY NIGHT OF THE WEEK IF 'E LIKES."

How I Lived in Paris Without Money.

The Story of a Modern Bohemian.

By FREDERIC LEES.

Illustrations from Photographs by Paul Géniaux, Paris.

"La Bohème n'existe et n'est possible qu'à Paris."—HENRY MURGER.

SOMEBODY told me, in speaking of the rapid modernization which Paris has undergone of recent years, that Bohemianism was dead; that the Latin Quarter, alas! was no longer what it was; that I might search there in vain for such heroes as are described in "Scènes de la Vie de Bohème." But I find (as I suspected) that I was misinformed. Murgerism—at any rate, in some of its forms—still exists. Student life in Paris is not yet wholly without romance. There are still many chapters to be added to the "History of the Bohemians of Paris" before the word "Finis" is written. Indeed, I cannot help asking myself if that fascinating book will ever be completed.

I made this reassuring discovery at the Café d'Harcourt, on the Boul' Mich'. There are two *cafés* on that world-famed thoroughfare where students of the "Quarter" congregate—the Source and the d'Harcourt. In my salad age the latter used to be my favourite; so, on setting out to revisit one of my old haunts, I naturally gave it the preference. With what misgivings did I cross the threshold! Should I find things changed beyond recognition? Would there be nothing to remind me of former days—those joyous days of youth? But a glance, on entering in company with a friend, sufficed to tell me that my fears were groundless. The pleasant-faced old waiter who used to welcome me and find me a seat well out of the way of draughts was, of course, no longer there; the furniture and the ornamentation were up-to-date and strangely unfamiliar; here and there were slight changes in the staging of the scene. But the actors were the same. There were the same long-haired youths, gravely diluting their absinthe, noisily chattering; the same Musettes and Mimis, coquettish and provocative, passing in and out between the rows of tables, with a word or a nod to their friends.

"Halloa, Marcel! What are you doing here?" cried a close-shaven young man to my friend as we were wandering about looking for a convenient place to view the company.

"Revisiting Bohemia."

And, as we squeezed into the rather out-of-the-way corner where the student was sitting, my friend explained the situation to him.

"False! *La Bohème ne meure jamais!*"

"If you say so, Rodolphe, it must be true. You speak with authority, for your experiences are innumerable. You are, I am afraid, incorrigible. Anything new since I last saw you?"

"*Naturellement!* There is always something new cropping up in the life of a Bohemian Do you think that your friend, the *Anglais*, now that he has become accustomed to the ways of the bourgeois, could live in Paris for a fortnight without money? No, of course he couldn't. He must have his *chic* apartments at the Grand Hotel, his meals at a boulevard restaurant, his auto-taxi, etc. But I—as I will tell you, if you will listen—can do without all these things. We Bohemians are a superior race of beings!"

We smiled at this outburst, in the true vein of Murger, but kept our own counsel, lest the flow of reminiscences was stemmed.

"I am proud of many things that I have done since I came to the 'Quartier,'" continued the irrepressible Rodolphe, "but proudest of having lived in this city of luxury for a whole fortnight absolutely without *galette*. We were getting near the time for the examinations, too; and yet, in spite of all my difficulties, I managed to emerge from them—a full-fledged *avocat*. But let me begin at the beginning."

And, having taken another sip at his *apéritif*, Rodolphe, with the eternal cigarette between his finger and thumb and a smile on his careless face, entered on his story.

"It all arose through a mistake on the part

"The only roof I had to my head during that fortnight was one of the hospitable bridges which cross our noble river."

of the *sacré* postman. My father, you know, is an official out in Indo-China, and every month, as regular as clockwork, he sends me my allowance—a very liberal one, I must say, though somehow I never seem to find it enough towards the end of the four weeks. Well, three months ago, on the day my cheque ought to have arrived, judge of my dismay when the post brought me nothing. As I had promised on my word of honour to pay my hotel bill that very morning, I could not help realizing that I was face to face with a very serious situation. But I buoyed myself up with the hope that the letter would come by a later delivery, and, fearing to meet the hotel-keeper, issued swiftly from my *garni* into the street. My hopes, however, were destined to be dashed to the ground; the remittance came not, and the landlord, on the following morning, had to be faced. I found him (as I expected) inexorable. Nothing would satisfy him but current coin of the realm. It is true that I was already a month behindhand with the rent, and had already made him two—or was it three?—promises to pay. He replied, in answer to my statement that my father was an important functionary, and that his monthly cheque had gone astray, that he had heard 'that tale' before. I must go—seek a lodging elsewhere, and, until the two months' rent was paid, he would keep my trunk as security!

"I sallied forth, a sad but determined man. The only money I had in my pocket was twenty-five centimes, for I had run terribly short that month; the only worldly possessions I had, apart from my clothes, were the papers and books in the portfolio under my arm. Spending the money on a final coffee and rolls, I went to my lectures at the Sorbonne—and tried to forget.

"I date my fortnight without money from the noon of that day, for it was then that I began to feel the pangs of hunger. Whilst my fellow-students went off in joyous bands to their usual restaurants, I made an excuse for not joining them and sought a secluded corner in the Luxembourg Gardens. Why didn't I unfold my troubles to one of them and borrow a louis? you ask. Because, messieurs, I was proud and had not, like the impecunious Schaunard of Murger's immortal work, raised the act of borrowing to the height of an art. Moreover, as I have said before, I was a determined man—determined to see the adventure to its end, come what might.

"My reflections, as I sat on a cold stone seat in those celebrated gardens, were multitudinous and disconcerting. Homeless and with an empty stomach, I realized that I had set out in earnest in search, as Balzac says, 'of that which the inhabitants of Bohemia are ever looking for, *la pâtée et la niche*.' Like my illustrious namesake in 'Scènes de la Vie de Bohème,' I was probably destined to live for some weeks to come in a more vagabond state than the clouds—to learn the art of going to sleep without supper and of supping

"The first thing I did in the morning was to have a free wash in the Seine."

without going to sleep. My cook was to be M. Hasard and I was to lodge at the Auberge de la Belle-Etoile.

"I tried to recollect the names of all the men of genius who had once been in the same position as I was, and found the occupation wonderfully uplifting. Forain, the great black-and-white artist, was one of them. He often slept in the open in his Bohemian days, and I decided to go to his old hotel. Thus, when night came, I dragged myself, weak and famished, in the direction of the banks of the Seine.

"The only roof I had to my head during that fortnight was one of the hospitable bridges which cross our noble river. The first night was somewhat of a failure as regards slumber, but I gradually got quite used to my stony couch and can now sleep on anything, however hard.

"The first thing I did on getting up in the morning was to walk into my commodious *cabinet de toilette*—the open air—and have a free wash in the Seine. Soap? What did I do for soap? That, *mes chers amis*, is a wholly unnecessary luxury of modern life. There is nothing like sand—fine sand—for washing yourself with, and there are always plenty of heaps to be found along the quays.*

"I must confess that, on the first morning, I wandered forth from the banks of the river in a decidedly sad state of mind. Like another famous Bohemian, Maître Pierre Gringoire, I tramped, a thin and famished mortal, along the streets of the city, wondering where I should get my *petit déjeuner* before going to my studies, and fearing that I should have to tighten my waistbelt another inch. With my nose in the air like a dog that has roused game, I marched along, sniffing at the delicious odour of coffee that rose from basement kitchens and feasting my eyes on the heaps of crisp, brown *croissants* in the bakers' shops. But these were not for me! 'I must tighten my belt and dispense

"Outside a barracks I came across some pieces of bread."

with breakfast,' said I to myself. But the thought had no sooner passed through my brain than, lo and behold! outside a barracks I came across some pieces of bread. I can assure you I did not criticize their quality. They were a veritable godsend, for they kept me going until luncheon-time and enabled me to turn up at the University with a fairly smiling face.

"The luncheon problem had, alas! to be solved only too soon; and I began to see that I must enter on a definite campaign with the object of getting two meals a day. I decided to do without the first breakfast and concentrate all my attention on obtaining food for my so-called luncheon and dinner. One thing I was determined not to do—namely, beg. If anyone offered me bread and meat, which I considered very unlikely, I would accept. But I realized that I must depend upon finding; and with this principle well before me I set out

"I cooked my meals in an old tin can."

* Senhouse, the hero of Mr. Maurice Hewlett's "Open Country," is of the same opinion. —F. L.

"I sometimes ate my luncheon on a bench in the Bois."

on my quest. Now, provident though the Parisians generally are, it is surprising how much goes to waste in this city. If you would see for yourself, make an early morning excursion to the neighbourhood of the Central Markets and you will find that, figuratively speaking, a regiment could be fed on what is thrown away. The Halles were one of my most profitable hunting-grounds. There are many others which are frequented by the Bohemians of Paris, but the mention of the principal one will suffice.

"It is curious how soon one adapts oneself to a new situation! After the first two days things seemed to fall into their proper order. I had perfect confidence that Providence would look after me. Wherever I went I was certain to have a stroke of good luck. Wandering in the Bois de Boulogne, in the neighbourhood of the fashionable Pré Catelin Restaurant, I was fortunate enough, in the early days of my experience, to come across a hen's nest. How I blessed that fowl for laying away from home! She was a veritable mother to me. I encouraged her laudable instinct by daily abstracting her offerings, and, chuckling over my find, retired to the *fortifs* to cook my meals *à la* Robinson Crusoe.

"I generally had my dinner on the *fortifs*, those obsolete fortifications around Paris which the authorities apparently retain for the special benefit of the Apache. Frequented by the hooligans of our city, and often the scene of their private quarrels, you can always count on being undisturbed there either by the police or the bourgeois. I lit my fire (I possessed a box of matches which were left over from the days of my prosperity) without anybody calling me to account, and cooked my meals in an old tin can I had found somewhere, as tranquil and as happy as though I had been on a desert island.

"To have a little variation, I sometimes ate my luncheon on a bench in one of the shady avenues which intersect the Bois. And, to cite another instance of how well the gods looked after me, I frequently came across a morning newspaper, left by a heedless *promeneur*. So, you see, I had intellectual as well as bodily food free of charge, and had the satisfaction of being able to show my fellow-students that I was *au courant* with the political, social, and artistic events of the day.

"As regards wood for firing, this can always be picked up in our streets. There is nothing like worn-out wooden paving-blocks, either for cooking or warming; and I knew where a good supply of this invaluable fuel could be had for nothing. It was the same with drink. Thanks to your Sir Richard Wallace," and Rodolphe addressed these words principally to me, "thanks to the noble benefactor who presented the City of Paris with its very artistic drinking-fountains, pure water is ever at the disposal of the thirsty *sans le sou*.

"As regards wood for firing, this can always be picked up in our streets."

"Amusement? I could always attend the Punch and Judy show in the Avenue des Champs Elysées."

"So much for food and drink—the two great things which the Bohemian is most anxious about. Now let us turn to the minor necessities of life, and see how all of them can likewise be had for nothing.

"There is never any difficulty for the penniless man in Paris to find a warm, luxurious resting-place during the day. If he be of a bookish nature he can count on getting as comfortable an arm-chair and as convenient a desk at the Bibliothèque Nationale as anywhere; if his tastes are artistic, the doors of the Louvre are open to him. Without having the worry and expense which the rich man with a private picture gallery imposes upon himself, he can study the works of the great masters in our national museum to his heart's content. The Louvre, I noted, is greatly patronized in winter by impecunious connoisseurs, who are almost invariably to be seen standing over the hot-air gratings — with their thoughts, I imagine, centred rather on warmth than on art.

"As I was working hard for my examination, I was usually at the Bibliothèque Nationale at nine o'clock, on the opening of the doors, and there, when I was not taking luncheon in the Bois, I remained until four, the hour for closing. What did I do for food on library days? Why, take a couple of hard-boiled eggs with me, cooked the night before, and, with a hunch of bread which I smuggled into the *salle de travail*, ate surreptitiously behind my pile of books. Then, when the hour for closing came and I was once more a homeless man, I spent the time until dinner walking or sitting in the Tuileries, learning the notes which I had culled during the day.

"Before turning in for the night I had a good warm at a workman's brasier."

"Amusement? How did I get that without payment? Simply enough. I could always attend a theatrical performance for nothing. I was one of the loudest applauders in front of the Punch and Judy show in the Avenue des Champs Elysées. To tell you the truth, I prefer the Guignol, with its simple comedy and tragedy, to some of our Parisian

"One day I even had an auto-taxi ride 'pour rien.'"

theatres, where, so complicated and painful are the themes represented, one is anything but amused. Really, now, is it any longer a distraction to listen to the *pièces à clef* — veritable lectures they are, some of them—of certain Parisian dramatists?

"One day, when I was feeling very tired, I even had an auto-taxi ride *pour rien*. But it was at the back of the car, which happened to be empty, and, though the chauffeur was off his guard, a decidedly dangerous thing to do, for, as we passed through the streets in the direction of the Sorbonne, the incident naturally created some amount of hilarity among passers-by, and this might easily have led to unpleasant consequences. So I decided never to repeat the experiment.

"After the first two days I was lucky enough to find a bridge which was provided with a wooden erection that protected me from the cold north wind at night."

"*Voilà!* I think I have given you a fairly full account of how I managed to get through that fortnight without money. No; one thing I have forgotten. Before turning in for the night (and after the first two days I was lucky enough to find a bridge which was provided with a wooden erection that protected me from the cold north wind) I had a good warm at a workman's brasier at a spot where the street was up through work connected with the underground railway. It has been a bitterly cold winter, as you know, and I appreciated that street fire."

"I picked up the ends of cigars and cigarettes outside the cafés on the boulevards."

"And what did you do when you wanted a smoke? That, at any rate, you could not get without money," I remarked to Rodolphe, who was in the act of rolling his fourth cigarette.

"*Erreur, mon cher!* You can get even tobacco for nothing in Paris if you know the ropes. Inveterate smoker that I am, I couldn't do without the weed, so, like a real *mégottier*—though I blush to confess it—I picked up the ends of cigars and cigarettes outside the *cafés* on the boulevards. But you have yet to hear the sequel of my story. At the end of my fortnight *sans argent* I happened to meet one of my old hotel acquaintances on the Boul' Mich'. '*Tiens!* there you are at last!' he exclaimed. 'Rodolphe M——'—a science student with the same Christian name as myself and a similar family name—'has been looking for you for the past week. He had a letter for you, but as he could never find you he left it at the hotel. It was delivered by mistake at No. 32, Rue des Ecoles, instead of No. 22, and the stupid ass put it in his pocket and forgot it for seven days. Whatever have you been doing with yourself lately? Cramming for the exam.?'

"But I didn't wait to give him any explanations. Off I rushed to my late hotel, and there, sure enough, I found the letter and the remittance waiting for me.

"I returned, there and then, to my old life, but I assure you it was without regret that I looked back to my experiences as a true Bohemian. Those two weeks taught me many a lesson—perhaps a greater lesson than ever I learnt at the venerable, learned Sorbonne. They taught me to be simple in my tastes, to do without some of the luxuries to which we have used ourselves—in brief, to make life a little less complicated than it is."

Crystal Among Coal.

By HERMAN SCHEFFAUR.

Illustrated by S. S. Lucas.

"THIS cloak, missus, will keep the coal off your lovely dress," said the benign old superintendent, Joel Strachey, of the Poole-Kethley Colliery, as he helped the elegant Mrs. Dunford on with an old rain-coat. "And this is for to keep your head free o' the black dust," he added, as he gently set a miner's cap upon the shining coils of her light-brown hair. Above the visor of the cap he hung the little miner's oil-lamp.

Her husband stood in the opposite corner of the little office. He, too, had donned an old rubber coat, which hid the fashionable garments made by the most exclusive of London tailors. His own hat lay upon the table; a grimy leather cap was pulled over his scant iron-grey hair. As he stood there a feeling of aversion more intense than usual came over his wife, a handsome woman of thirty-five. For between him and the rough miners that stood about all visible and external differences had vanished. The features of this mine-broker were heavy and plain and coarse as theirs, but they were harder, too, the eyes small and crafty—the whole face lacking the hearty, simple kindliness which redeemed these begrimed faces. Even the cropped moustache and side-whiskers he had affected for some years had lost their distinction.

Old Strachey now led them toward the head of the slope, past the great hills of slate and refuse and the soft-piled pyramids of sifted coal. Lawrence Dunford surveyed all things with sharp and critical eye. For he was about to purchase the Poole-Kethley Colliery, and, having obtained the required permission, found it wise to make this unannounced and personal trip of inspection ere settling the matter of the purchase with the owners. He accepted no expert's opinion as higher or weightier than his own; he was not to be juggled with nor cheated, for he himself was wise in the lore of coal-mining and knew collieries of old—as most men knew their houses. Sixteen years ago he had been the superintendent of the Darvene Colliery at Kaldwin, thirty miles to the east.

Yesterday, when he was about to leave London on this errand of inspection, his wife had begged him to take her with him. In her request there had been an insistent and unusual wistfulness he could not understand—but, then, there was much in her he could never understand. She had always hated, or pretended to hate, these black mining regions, where she had been born and where he had first met her as a very young and lonely woman. Was she surfeited with the city? Was this a touch of homesickness for familiar surroundings, however sombre—for the scenes of her simple, Spartan girlhood—or merely one of the whimsical, capricious notions which ennui bred in the brains of women when they grew idle? For now she was indeed idle, and had grown strangely luxurious in tastes and habits—pampered by him, to be sure—as were all the jaded, nerve-harried wives of his financial associates. When he had married her she had brought him all the energies and resources of her helpful, vital nature, had seized upon the joys and duties of their common life with immense zest, as was natural for a wife who had evolved out of a simple, healthy, hard-working girl. But when he grew rich it was natural, too, that she should succumb to her enervating environment and evolve into a delicate, ornamental, parasitic appendage. Little enough of imagination and emotion had he, but something reminiscent stirred within him, something that touched upon some hidden, unblunted nerve, called into life by this haunting, dark, and unforgotten glamour of the mines. He glanced at his wife. She, too, seemed under the spell. She had been light-hearted at first, had laughed with joy at sight of the green-topped, ravaged hills, and had entered into merry speech with the sooty men. Now she was silent, silent in a way he understood—all her enthusiasm and excitement held in check by some disturbance of the spirit. Was she, like him, thinking of Kaldwin—Kaldwin that meant

so much to both? The thought of her abstraction was bitter to him.

Three empty iron cars stood on the slanting track beneath the framework of the enormous drums upon which the steel cables wound and unwound. Dunford assisted his wife into the third wagon and bade her sit down upon the dust-covered bottom. He crouched beside her. Strachey climbed in, too, and righted the oil-flares on their caps. Mechanically, as by an old habit, Dunford counted the men who climbed into the other cars—there were not more than the law allows.

At a word from Strachey the signal-wire rattled and Dunford knew that a bell clanged in the bowels of the earth. Then came the answer, as another parallel wire grew taut and the gong in the shed struck loudly thrice. The cars began to move downward; the thick cable attached to them by immense iron bands and hooks paid slowly off the turning wheel. Clanking, they rolled down the incline, gathering speed, then plunged into the earth. The glare of the sun was blotted from their little world, and there remained only the murky and flittering light of the tiny and smoky lamps.

Less than a foot above their heads the heavy timbers and bare rock of the slope-tunnel rushed by as the cars raced, jerked, and shook their way into the depths. As the pitch of the vein ran steep, the tracks followed it between the strata. Then they shot down almost perpendicularly, and Mrs. Dunford braced herself against the sides, a vague terror at the heart, a sense of fear and gloom crushing her spirits as with the weight of the mountain above them. Only once before had she descended into a coal mine. She was a girl of seventeen then—it was at Kaldwin, in company with one she had known and cherished, one who long ago had made his last descent into the earth. Thus her memories delved backward into the past, as she sat beside her elderly, cold-hearted husband and sank deeper and deeper from the day. At last the cars slowed down and came heavily to rest at the bottom of the incline.

"The thirteen-hundred-foot level," said Superintendent Strachey, as he helped Mrs. Dunford out of the car.

To her it was as if they had fallen to the very core of the planet, hopeless prisoners, never again to be lifted to the free life upon the surface under the clear heavens, the vital sun and exalting stars. It was as if she were buried alive—buried alive with him for ever and for ever.

They stood in the main way of the mine. A draw of loaded tram-wagons had just been brought to the slope by a blind horse. The blank, chalky eyeballs of the animal shone spectral in the ruddy, uncertain light.

"The thirteen-hundred-foot level?" repeated Lawrence Dunford. "She goes deeper than that?"

"Only in the abandoned workings, sir," answered the old man, "in the 'robbed' workings to the north. Those run to fifteen hundred feet."

A tall, bearded man stood near the tracks, erect and motionless. The light in his cap threw deep shadows upon his features, which, powdered to a dusky tinge by the coal-dust, had almost the semblance of a black mask. Joel Strachey stepped up to him and said:—

"Henry, these are the visitors. Show the gentleman whatever he wishes to see—he has an order from the directors."

"All right, sir," replied the foreman.

It was Henry Mavis who, because of his liberal, self-acquired education, his superior manners, and good English, was always chosen to guide visitors through the great colliery. Yet by habit he spoke little and always in a subdued, monotonous tone acquired in the silence of the coal-pits. For a moment his large and pensive eyes dwelt indifferently upon the man and woman; he bowed, then led them along the main way. He pointed out the rock-hewn stables in which the patient horses stood in the same darkness into which they had been born to toil and die, led them into the lamp-rooms and the unlighted lofty chambers in which the great grey boilers lay hot and seething like brooding subterranean monsters, sending their power through iron arteries into every part of the mine. He led them along the muddy tracks wet with seepage, to another chamber in which gigantic pumps and engines glittered like scaly dragons of steel and gushed forth thick streams of water. In little stalls and chambers off the breast of headings and bords the miners worked, kneeling upon beds of shining coal. The iron cars rolled by laden to the tops, the horses driven by boys whose eyes gleamed white in faces black as those of negroes. Between the side-timbers sat men and youths, resting in the darkness, silent, or smoking pipes, speaking in low tones as the visitors passed.

"Smoking in mines is dangerous," said Dunford; "I'd not permit it myself."

"Our big centrifugal fans keep the air sweet and fresh," answered the foreman; "and though this was once a fiery, gassy

mine we've had no trouble from that source for years."

"I observe that all your lights are naked," said Dunford.

"Quite safe, sir. In case of fire, we could flood the lower levels in a few minutes."

By the light of his own flare-lamp Dunford made a note in a little book with a gold pencil. Mrs. Dunford spoke no word—the weird scenes as well as her thoughts oppressed her. She stumbled along as in a dream, gazing with vague eyes upon all. It seemed to her as though she were walking at the bottom of an inky sea, a region in which time and space were no more. The little flames burning on their caps—were not these like the feeble flickering and smoky fires of their own lives? How much smoke there was always mingled with the flame! If the torch of life might but burn clear, with a light pure and white, radiant as——

"THEY TRAVERSED TUNNEL AFTER TUNNEL, THE FOREMAN ANNOUNCING THE NAME, NUMBER, AND LOCATION OF EACH."

"Madam, permit me to give you this piece of spar. Not everything in a coal mine is black," said the stately foreman, gravely, as he handed Mrs. Dunford a morsel of rough, milk-white rock studded with sparkling crystals, which he had just broken off a slab.

Something in his voice startled her; her eyes, half hidden beneath her cap and the large veil she had tied beneath her chin, sought his own in the uncertain gloom. She took the crystals and thanked him. Now and again he offered her his strong hand to help her over boggy places. They came to one of the great air-doors—partitions to control the direction of the ventilation. The air roared and pulled behind them as the large wooden valve was opened, and then silence encompassed them once more. They traversed tunnel after tunnel, the foreman announcing the name, number, and location of each. In passing a group of miners Mavis remarked that they would pass at once to the higher levels. Finally they encountered no more teams nor miners. These headings were not worked at present, the foreman told them. A full half-mile now separated them from the nearest workers. They came to another air-door. Upon the casing words were written in chalk, and opposite these two crosses were marked.

"The crosses," said Mrs. Dunford—"what do they mean?"

"Surely you ought to know," answered her husband; "they mean danger."

"There is danger here only when blasting is done," said their guide, in a low, sedate voice. "The shale is very loose. Sometimes it falls and keeps falling, and then men are buried alive. Sometimes we get them out in time—or parts of them by quick

surgery—quick and crude." Mrs. Dunford shuddered.

"Buried alive!" she exclaimed. "Oh! once——"

"Come!" said her husband, roughly, leading her into the new gallery.

The bearded, black-faced foreman pointed out the close timbering in this passage.

"There are bands of slate and sulphur here," he explained, "that cause us heaps of trouble."

"Timbers here 'skin to skin,'" said Dunford, as he again drew forth his note-book—"strata of slate and sulphur."

Henry Mavis flung a glance of respectful curiosity toward this rich, well-informed stranger, but said nothing. They walked to the end of the wide and Stygian tunnel. Here there was an opening tightly boarded up.

"This," said Mavis, "leads up and then down to the old abandoned workings on the fifteen-hundred-foot level."

"I'd like to inspect those levels," said the mine-speculator.

"No visitors are permitted there," was the miner's reply; "this brattice cuts off all access."

"I have full permission from the owners to see all parts of this mine," said Dunford, arrogantly. "It is necessary that I should see this part too. The brattice can be removed."

Mavis made no reply, but his face grew stern. Then he recalled the words of old Strachey: "Show the gentleman whatever he wishes to see—he has an order from the directors." He hesitated a moment, then remarked:—

"Very well—wait here. I will fetch an axe."

When he had gone silence lay between husband and wife. For a moment their eyes met, then Mrs. Dunford seated herself wearily upon a huge beam.

"Hang your moping!" the man burst forth. "Had I known you'd act this way I'd never have brought you! Must you always be thinking of that fellow—of that accident? This is not Kaldwin!"

The woman sighed. "The mine," said she—"the crosses on the door—bring it all back—no, no; it is something else—perhaps the air—I don't know what."

She let her veiled head sink into her hands.

"You're nervous; you need a rest," he said, less harshly. "I'll send you to Tunbridge when we get back."

Nothing more was said, and the same iron, unbroken silence reigned until the foreman returned. An axe gleamed upon his shoulder. With a few blows of the keen blade he cut through and loosened the brattice and pulled it aside. Here the air was still heavier—dank, inert, full of decay. The three little oil-lamps dangling and rattling in their caps burned duskily. By the faint, lurid reflex cast around, they saw the rotted beams overhead, crumbling away or covered with mildew or fungus, and bulging under thrust of the ponderous masses above. Stalactites of salt hung from the rocky roof, and old, worn rails and wooden ties lay half-buried in the silt of the ancient tunnel. In a great chamber excavated in one wall their reddish lights revealed titanic masses of iron, huge boilers, and abandoned machinery, covered with fallen earth, red with rust, sprawling amidst a ruin of brickwork and tangled, slimy pipes—a mute, ghostly, and piteous wreck of power, now lying useless and forgotten in the vast tomb it had once helped to hollow. It was like the decayed monument of some distant age, of some vanished, plutonian race, brought suddenly to their eyes. The three human beings felt something of the sublime and sombre majesty of this rayless, soundless, subterranean grave.

"These workings have been 'robbed,'" said the foreman—"that is, most of the intermediate supporting-pillars of coal have been removed. The only way to reach the lower levels is by means of this old slope."

They halted before the black, yawning mouth of the inclined tunnel.

"I am tired," said Mrs. Dunford; "I will wait here," and she sat down upon a block of slate.

"Very well," said her husband. "But I must go down; I've a plan to make use of these old levels. And I can just as well go alone," he added, turning to Mavis; "I know the run of the workings by heart."

The foreman looked at Mrs. Dunford. He felt the vague terror and alarm that had attacked her, and the weakness.

"If that is so," he answered, slowly, "perhaps I had better remain here with the lady until you return."

Without another word Lawrence Dunford made his difficult way down the rock-encumbered slope. The two left behind saw the light on his cap dwindle into a faint spark, then he vanished into a lateral gallery far down.

"That is the fourteen-hundred-foot level," spoke the foreman. "He goes another hundred feet deeper."

"You have been long in the mines?" asked Mrs. Dunford.

"Since I was fifteen, madam," answered Mavis.

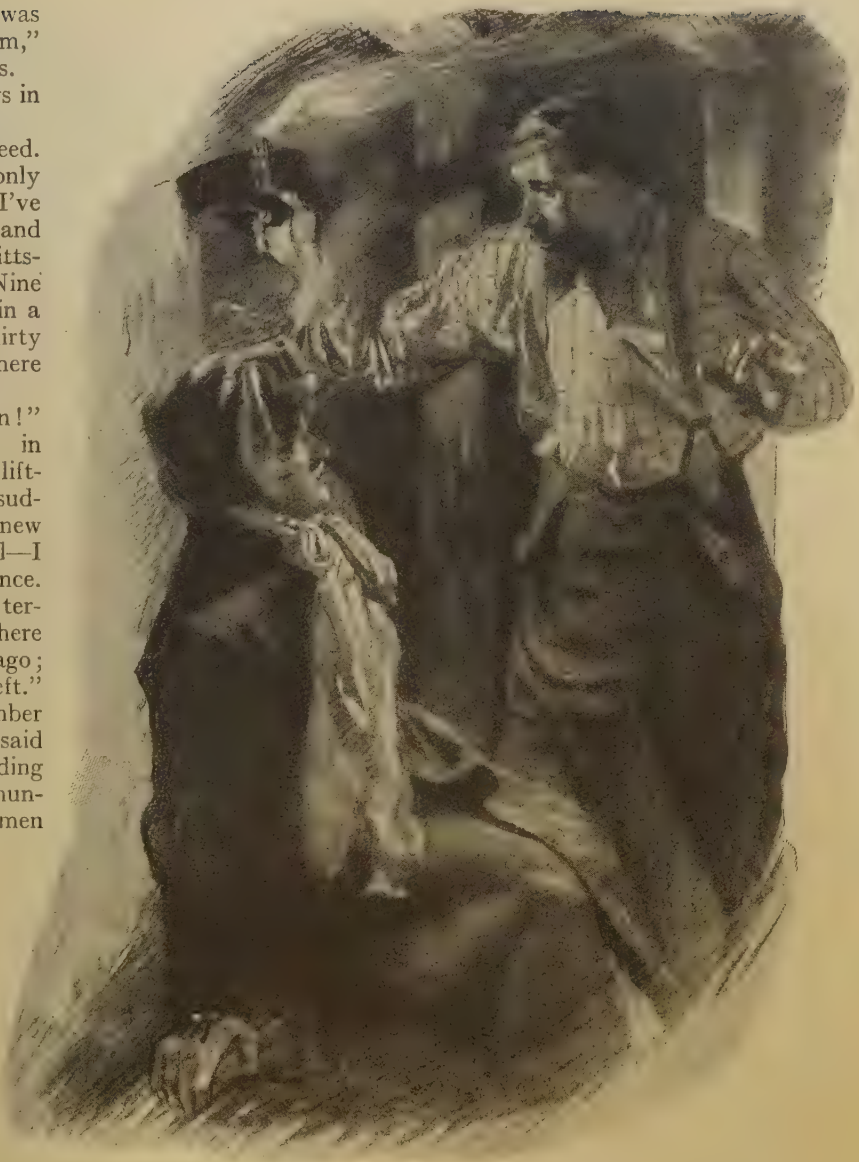
"And always in this mine?"

"No, indeed. I've been here only five years. I've worked here and there from Pittston down. Nine years I spent in a big mine thirty miles east of here—at Kaldwin."

"At Kaldwin!" she exclaimed in astonishment, lifting her head suddenly. "I knew the place well—I lived there once. There was a terrible disaster there sixteen years ago; it was then I left."

"I remember the accident," said the man, nodding his head; "a hundred and ten men werekilled."

"I could not stand it," said the woman, with an expressive gesture. "Death was everywhere! I, too, lost a friend—a dear friend. And I left soon after."



"'IT CAN'T BE,' HE SAID, SIMPLY, 'BECAUSE I AM HENRY MAVIS.'"

"Friends? It is not only in mines that we lose them," said the foreman, solemnly.

"Perhaps you may remember my friend—if you were there. He was crushed to death, they said, before the mine caught fire. They never found his body. His name was Henry Mavis."

The foreman seemed transfixed into a rigidity almost statuesque. With an effort he asked her to repeat the name. And it was again his own. His eyes widened, he stepped closer to the lady, took off his cap, and held it so that the rays fell full upon his blackened features.

"It can't be," he said, simply, "because *I* am Henry Mavis."

Mrs. Dunford gave a strange, inarticulate cry, which echoed through the lonely gallery. She rose and seized the man by the arms, peered up into his eyes, covered his beard and mouth with her hands, pushed back the long hair from the brow, scrutinized the fine, regular features with her devouring gaze.

"Yes! yes—you are! you are!" she cried,

hysterically. "Harry, Harry! It is you, you—and alive—alive!"

He in turn now stared upon her in the sallow, smoky light, seeking to fathom her eyes under the projecting visor of the cap, and the features half-hidden by the voluminous motor-veil. She loosened this; it hung down on either side, revealing the fair, full face and the glinting hair that welled forth above her temples.

"Paula!" he exclaimed. "You, Paula! What brings you here?"

"Not dead!" she repeated over and over again, holding him by the arms, while her eyes, beaming with an inexpressible joy, roved over the stalwart figure. "Not dead!—your voice—why did I not know it at once? Yet it puzzled me—it has changed. You, too, have changed—I could not know you with that beard, nor——"

"All has changed, Paula," he said, sorrowfully. "What made you think me dead?"

His voice was firm, his face like a tragic mask hewn from ebony. Her own eyes lost their light under the shadow of some sinister memory.

"They told me you were dead—they said your body was never found—that you were buried alive—or burned!"

"Who said that?"

"Why—why, Mr. Dunford came to tell me that—after the disaster."

"Dunford—the superintendent? But why should he have told you that? He was the very one who knew I was alive! He said he was my friend; he had me taken at once to a hospital in Liverpool. For seven months I lay there—less than a baby—with broken arms and crushed chest. And no word came from you, no answer to the letters Dunford wrote for me. I could not know why. I never learned the reason, except that when I returned to Kaldwin you were gone—no one knew whither. It was said you left suddenly to be married—no one knew to whom."

"Yes, yes," she said, faintly, her voice struggling through her lips. "I thought you were dead, Harry! How could I know it was not so? I was all alone in Kaldwin—alone like yourself. So I went to London. He said you were buried alive, he said you were burnt," she repeated, helplessly.

"It might have been well for me if it had been so," returned the man, in a sepulchral tone. "But I was not dead, as you see. When I found you gone I lost all interest in myself, in life, in my ambitions, in study and science, in the mastery of things I once longed to accomplish—for our sakes! And so I remained a miner, instead of becoming a master; a mere miner, Paula—although I have risen to be foreman. Yes, they were quite right—ever since that day I have really been buried alive."

He smiled grimly, yet in his speech there was a pathos that rose from some deep and long-sealed grief at the foundations of his being, some tragic fluke of destiny which had darkened this essentially lofty nature.

"You are more than a mere miner, Henry! You are yourself—you will always be that! You are still what I always called you—do you remember?—crystal among coal—yes, clear and true and pure as this fragment you gave me a little while ago."

He lowered his head and leaned against the heavy framework at the mouth of the slope. His figure seemed to Paula Dunford like that of some shadowy, world-weary Atlas, standing in the eclipse of his life and crushed by the burden of the dark, toilsome existence she had once inspired him to cast off—this man worthy of the stars. Tears sprang to her eyes; she wept silently for him—as for herself. Their two defrauded hearts beat in futile protest, empty as this "robbed" and abandoned mine. She reached for his hands, then gave a gasp as she raised the left one to the light. The ring-finger was missing.

"I lost the finger in that accident," he said, calmly. "The finger would not have mattered much, but the ring you gave me was upon it. But perhaps the ring did not matter much, either—since I lost more than that."

She pressed an impulsive kiss upon the black, mutilated hand, and a hot tear fell upon it.

"But I loved you, Harry," she murmured. "I always loved you. This very day I thought of nothing but you—everything about this strange colliery spoke of you—of the old days."

Her voice faltered; she let go his hand and sank down upon the block of slate.

"To think that we should meet again—after sixteen years—here in the depths of this mine—so far from Kaldwin!"

"There are greater distances than time or space," said the miner.

Then both were silent, until Mavis, with bent and puzzled brows, his large eyes full of doubt and brooding, began repeating:—

"Why should Dunford have lied about me? He took care of me—he was my friend. Why should he have lied?"

The woman shook her head slowly, and

clasped and unclasped her hands in agitation. How simple was this strong and noble soul—how grandly simple, how beautifully trustful!

"That man," said Mavis, suddenly, pointing down the profundity of the slope—"who is he?"

"My husband."

"Your name?" asked the betrothed of her youth. "What is it now?"

"Oh, do not ask me that!" she cried out, a sudden terror upon her. The next moment she added: "But you will learn it after all. He comes to buy the mine. It is Dunford!"

He looked at her fixedly, but in his eyes there lay a startled and pathetic look—a tremor came into his voice.

"Dunford! He your husband! No, it cannot be. Dunford was a different man."

"He has changed—just as you, as I, have changed. It is sixteen years, Henry."

Then a light broke upon his mind, illuminating all the enigmatic fateful past, devastating his year-long faith in this man, striking like a forked, flaming bolt into the tender tissues of his heart and mind—a flash rending, yet clarifying, all, betraying the hideous treachery whereby he had been cheated of this woman by his side and she of him.

He, too, sat down wearily, as one suddenly aged or overborne by calamity; a few broken words escaped him; he let his head sink upon his chest. His shoulders heaved and there came from him that sound that breaks the hearts of women and undoes their souls with pity—the sobbing of a strong and suffering man. She stroked his hair.

"We are fellow-victims, Harry," said she. "He, too, has been punished—love was dead between us from the very beginning."

The silence that ensued was suddenly broken by a distant uproar, a rumble, a faint alarum of bells. There came also a scent of burning—as of straw—borne in on the wandering air-currents. The foreman leaped to his feet.

"Wait here!" he exclaimed, then ran toward the opening through which they had come. A full quarter of an hour elapsed ere he returned, enveloped in a mist of smoke. His smouldering clothes, covered with sparks, burst suddenly into flame as he approached. He tore off his flannel shirt and stood bare to the waist, his black face and beard in sharp contrast to the white of his body.

"The stables and timbering in the northwest mainway are afire," he said; "the men have already been taken out. I could not get to the hoist because of the smoke and flame. I'm afraid they think we're already out of this, as I told them we intended going to the higher levels."

She screamed and clung to him.

"Do not be afraid," he said; "you are safe."

Now was heard a far-off rushing sound of confined waters dashing and roaring through the shaken earth, a liquid thunder that reverberated and muttered fearfully.

"Those are the pumps at work," said Mavis, calmly; "they have turned the water into a part of this level to flood the fire. We are safe however, for the bottom of this old gallery here is higher than the top of that yonder. When the main way is flooded they'll turn the water into the abandoned workings down there——"

He sprang toward the mouth of the slope down which Dunford had vanished. Paula clung to his arm.

"No, no," she implored, and in her frantic tone a savage instinct of hate strove with a new-born tenderness, "do not go! do not risk your life—not for his! If anything happens to him he deserves it—he separated us! And now that I've found you I'll not let you go again—no! no!"

He shook off her hold and made several steps downward. She wrung her hands as he clambered swiftly down the rock-strewn descent. With a threatening, muffled roar the distant waters surged through the mine; it seemed to her they must fill every corner as they stormed and foamed from the throats of the colossal pipes. But whether they dashed to her right or left, over head or under foot, she could not know. After a while she saw a little light appear at the bottom of the fourteen-hundred-foot level—only one. Panting, streaming with sweat and streaked with soot, black and formidable as a devil from the infernal caves, Mavis climbed up the incline.

"Merciful Heaven! where is he?" screamed the wife.

Mavis, breathing heavily, made no reply, but ran toward the broken brattice, returning with the axe he had used to force it.

Horror, fear, and uncertainty played across the features of Mrs. Dunford.

"Tell me," she cried, hoarsely, laying hold of the axe, "where is he? You have not killed him?—you are not going to kill him—Henry?"

"No," said Mavis, "I am going to save him. He is caught by the legs under a heavy fall of earth and rock, brought down from the roof of the lowest level by the running of the water above. I tried to pull him out, but

could not. That often happens here—as I told you. It's a case of life or limb—we save the life and leave the limb. Let me go!" he exclaimed, feverishly, twisting the axe-handle out of her hands; "the roof is 'creeping,' and every moment he may be buried alive! Quick! give me some cloth from your dress!"

She obeyed, bent and tore a wide length off the skirt of her silken petticoat. Then once more a frightful temptation attacked her soul—a battle between the bondage of duty and the bondage of an old love that had burst forth anew. It seemed as if Fate was offering her freedom again and happiness, even in this hour of death—were she but strong enough to take it. She stood in the grim mouth of the shaft and spread out her arms. The flame burning in her little cap and the long veil made her vague and nebulous as the Angel of Death.

"Henry, I'll not let you go," she cried, madly; "you've done enough. It is retribution—fate—justice—let him be!"

"Letting him be is murdering him!" said the man. "If more rock drops he'll be buried alive——"

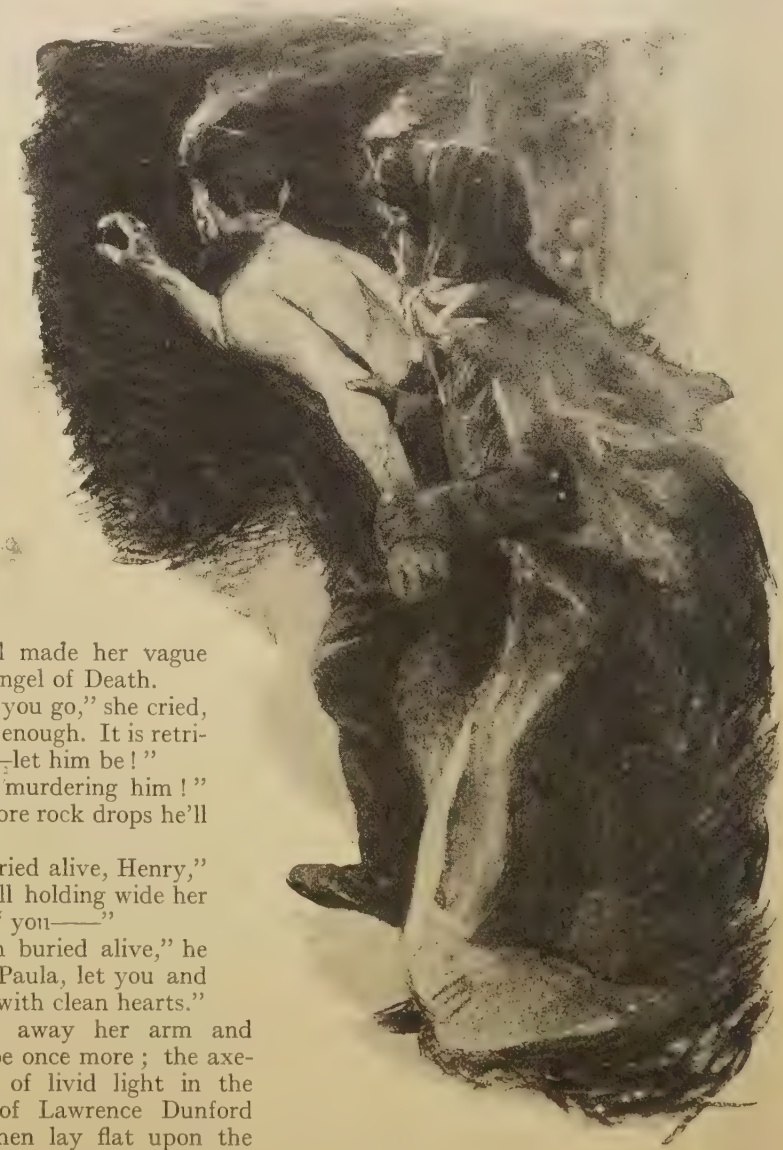
"You, too, were buried alive, Henry," wailed the woman, still holding wide her arms to restrain him, "you——"

"Well, we are both buried alive," he cried, harshly, "but, Paula, let you and me at least be buried with clean hearts."

Rudely he pushed away her arm and plunged down the slope once more; the axe-blade made a patch of livid light in the shadows. The wife of Lawrence Dunford sank to her knees, then lay flat upon the ground, her breast upon the burnt clothes he had torn from him. She stretched her head and her arms toward the retreating man.

"Crystal among the coal—as always! The same fine crystal among the common coal!" she murmured. "His soul, at least, is still unchanged."

Then she prayed—prayed the prayer of a passionate, despairing woman; prayed to the deaf, blind, and juggling fates that she might achieve some happiness again, that she might once more know love as it had been revealed to her in the heart of this true man. So she waited, alone with her vast emotions, relentless thoughts, and fierce hopes, peering



"PAULA CLUNG TO HIS ARM."

like some harpy with flaming eyes down into the impenetrable depths that had swallowed up the two men. Finally a faint glow grew visible, then a naked point of flame. Again but one! A feeling of triumph shot through her breast. But, she reflected, her husband's

lamp would naturally have gone out. As the light drew near she descried Mavis slowly and painfully making his way up the long, steep slope, a shapeless burden upon his back. She thought, with a shudder, of the limb the axe must have lopped away, rose to her feet, and turned away her eyes. Half-dead with exhaustion, his face set and his eyes a-stare, his naked breast heaving with the mighty exertion, the foreman staggered from the incline and laid his helpless charge at the feet of Paula Dunford. Shrinking away, while all her blood congealed, she nevertheless glanced at it—her husband, unconscious, his fine clothes torn to shreds, his face red with blood and black with coal-dust, but with all his limbs unmutilated. Yet his legs lay limp.

"I got him out," said Mavis, panting and gasping for breath, "without using the axe—but his legs are broken."

Paula Dunford looked down upon the inert human mass at her feet—this man twelve years older than he to whom she had once been plighted, this man who had thwarted their loves so he might win her for himself, who had grown rich and mighty in the great metropolis on the banks of the Thames—and then her eyes wandered to the poor, half-naked, and obscure foreman who had just torn him living from his grave. Coal and crystal—and the coal was hers!

Mavis, somewhat rested, again took the unconscious Dunford upon his shoulders and walked heavily toward the brattice that led back to the main galleries. He went a long, circuitous way, avoiding the water, doubling and returning and doubling again upon the great black walls and bords. Now and then he rested, but spoke no word to Paula Dunford, who followed silently. They reached one of the ventilating doors. It was locked—from the other side. Henry Mavis laid his man upon the ground, climbed a ladder in a stall, then made his way through a narrow cross-cut heading, crawling on hands and knees until he came through to the main way. Through this the water was still pouring like a river, but it had sunk several feet from the roof as it drained away steadily into the sump of the old workings. The carcasses of drowned horses floated in the tearing stream, bales of straw and great baulks of timber. He dropped into the water up to his arm-pits and, breasting the savage current, forced his way toward the lateral bord that led to the other side of the door. Once he slipped on the submerged track and sank, but rose to the surface fifty feet farther down and recovered his foothold. His light was extinguished; all was black. For all that, knowing his bearings well, he struggled on steadily, emerged from the flooded main way, and at last reached the great door. He drew the bolt and pulled it open. The fierce draught blew out the light in Mrs. Dunford's cap. As she heard the water dripping from his clothes in the thick darkness she uttered a cry of pity and alarm.

"It is nothing," came his voice in the stark night; "earth, air, fire, water—these are things a man can fight against. Come, hold me by the belt."

He carried Dunford toward the main hoist in the slope by which the couple had descended that afternoon. The tracks and woodwork still stood foot-deep in water. Lights were visible along the upper levels, and they heard the voices of men making ready to descend after the subsidence of the flood. Mavis reached for the brass handle of the bell-wire and gave the signal to descend. A shout went up above, and soon came the rumbling of the ponderous cars, the sound of many excited voices, the twinkle of many lights, the aid of many arms. The three were taken into the cars; the cable strained, and they rose towards the blessing of the day and the open air. The bluish daylight fell upon them, then they rolled into the bright afternoon sun, blinding, warm, and all-revealing.

They lifted Lawrence Dunford from the car and laid him upon the ground. The small eyes in the heavy visage did not open—they would never open again. Mrs. Dunford was helped out and went at once to the side of her husband. Her eyes fell on the distorted, blood-stained, sooty features—on the torn, defiled clothes and broken form. Then, lifting them, they fell upon the figure of Henry Mavis.

He stood erect in the sunlight, his face, arms, and body washed clean and white by the waters in the mine, a splendid figure, pure and heroic as the soul within it. Protruding from one of the pockets of his wet, clinging trousers she caught a glimpse of the white silk strip she had torn from her dress.

Ah! he had kept it!

Her teeth were set, her eyes fell, she clenched her hands until one of them pained her strangely. This hand she raised to look at it. On the soft, bruised palm, beside the wedding-ring and glistening like diamonds in the sun, lay the sharp and pointed crystal given to her in the mine by Henry Mavis—the broken morsel of crystal she had unwittingly retained in her hand.

What it Costs to Run a Theatre.

By Jerrard Grant Allen.

Miss Gertie Millar. Miss Lily Elsie. Miss Constance Drever. Miss Phyllis Dare.

STARS OF MUSICAL COMEDY.

WHEN one of the recent distinguished visitors to London was asked what struck him most, as compared with his last visit thirty odd years ago, he replied: "The change in the food and the change in amusements." Indeed, the stage and the tea-shop and restaurant are now amongst the most important features of English life. John Bull has taken to amusing himself.

Will it be believed that last year the British people spent nearly twenty-five million pounds in amusements? In 1873 it is estimated that they spent under four million pounds. Have you ever considered what a gigantic industry the stage has become in this kingdom? It may be likened to a great factory, a factory working night and day, turning out new theatres, new plays, new spectacles, new scenery, new costumes, new songs, new music, new situations, new jokes, new talents, new dances. Scores of able men are constantly devising, with Napoleonic ingenuity, fresh means of tickling the fancy of a fastidious public. Millions sterling of capital are invested merely in making the British people laugh. In brief, to amuse and entertain on the stage has grown to be the one serious concern of life to a population comprising altogether some forty thousand souls. It does not seem so long ago that there were scarcely a dozen theatres in the Metropolis and eighty in the whole of the kingdom. Now there are sixty-seven in London and seven hundred and thirty-eight in the provinces. Add to this that there are three hundred and eleven music-halls. As to output, last year there were no fewer than five hundred and forty-one new plays and important revivals produced, as against the one hundred and twelve of forty years ago.

Can you picture this army of forty thousand people drawn up in battle array—divided off into battalions, regiments, companies, captained by leading men and leading ladies, with a thousand dramatists, composers, musicians, scene-painters, costumiers, carpenters, and wig-makers in the rear—all posturing, singing, declaiming, and "gagging," and prepared at the word of command from Generals Edwardes, Frohman, Moss, Collins, Stoll, and the rest, forthwith to invade the

realms of drama, comedy, musical comedy, grand opera, light opera, farce, Shakespeare, tragedy, fantasy, episodes, pantomimes, Greek plays, sketches, and extravaganza? Is it not an inspiring sight? There is only one other theatrical army in the world like it, and that is in America. France, Germany, and Austria are wholly unused to such a multitude. The theatres, even in Paris, are small, and management is on a far smaller scale. And as for the status of the army and its scale of pay, they are far lower.

Having imagined such an army in action, who, it may be asked, would bear the brunt of battle? A generation or two ago the most important and best-paid people in the theatrical calling were the actors of the "legitimate" or old-fashioned heavy drama. All that is altered, and now the most important and highly-salaried artiste is the low comedian—the man who makes you laugh. I have heard it said that the late Sir Henry Irving, had he lived a little longer, might have been tempted, at a handsome fee, to do a comic turn at a music-hall.

In musical comedy a very great difference of opinion exists even amongst experts as to what constitutes the chief elements of success. One manager boldly hazards the opinion that the piece itself does not much matter, so long as there are plenty of pretty girls, pretty dresses, and at least two good waltzes. At the same time, the *mise en scène* should be more or less original—something which will give the piece a "character." In "The Geisha" the idea was a tea-shop in Japan. A good company was engaged, and when they had each worked up their parts so as to make a good all-round show, irrespective of the efforts of the author, a catchy song, "The Jewel of Asia," was dropped in at the last moment, and complete success, from the point of view of entertaining an audience, was obtained. Gradually the leading singers and comedians of both sexes have gone into musical comedy, and so won the favour of the public that they have become regular institutions, and the public have come to expect that some of these shall appear in every new piece that is offered for their approval. But as these favourites have contracts with certain managers, it makes it all the harder for an outsider to secure a popular cast for a piece in which he is interested.

Suppose a theatrical manager with a modest capital desires to invest his money in this class of entertainment. It must be remembered that dozens of managers have gone in for musical pieces, and have failed utterly; for the public is very capricious, and has also grown very exacting.

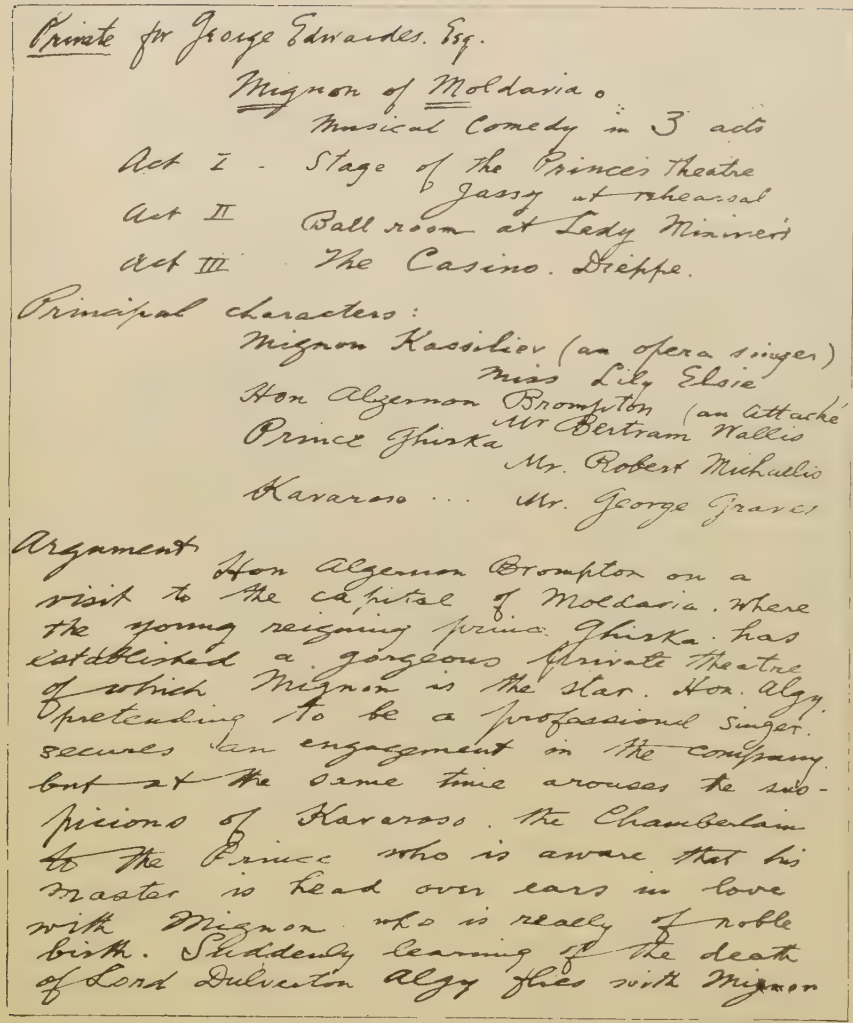
A modern musical comedy, such as that at Daly's Theatre, may be said to cost roughly ten thousand pounds to produce. Ten years ago three thousand pounds was all that was necessary, and twenty years ago two thousand pounds would have been more than sufficient. The enormous increase is due to heavier expenditure all round. Authors' fees are very much higher than they were, the performers' salaries have increased enormously, and the mounting is far more sumptuous. The scenery, dresses, and properties for an up-to-date production will probably amount to eight thousand pounds, of which three thousand five hundred pounds will be spent on dresses. It is not at all uncommon for the principal lady's dress-bill to amount to twelve hundred pounds during a long run. The total wages for the whole theatre will amount to about fifteen hundred pounds weekly, which includes about a hundred and fifty pounds for the orchestra.

Theatre rents, too, have increased enormously. A dozen years ago the rent of a West-end theatre was eighty-five pounds; now it is two hundred and fifty pounds.

Yet with these figures before him the manager resolves to take the plunge. If he has not got a piece up his sleeve he has to get one. Now, there are a score of men in London who make a speciality of furnishing ideas, the libretto, the lyrics, and the score for musical comedy. Some of these are overworked; some are pledged elsewhere; some have made a success which has not been repeated, has even been followed by many failures. One librettist submitted a "scheme" in which the scene was laid in Nubia, and the majority of the characters were to be blacked up! Another had better luck with Egypt as a setting, and his "Amasis" had a long run. On the next page is the actual scheme of a musical piece which a librettist of repute sent in to a manager.

After it had gone the rounds, the librettist was paid a hundred pounds for the idea. It was pigeon-holed, and so far has not seen the light of day, for the simple reason that no composer has been got to tackle it, the successful ones being too busy with their own productions. Another has a splendid idea in a river scene, with real water, real boats, punts, and canoes, all the performers keeping time, somewhat hazardously, to a waltz tune.

But suppose "Mignon of Moldavia" had been set by Mr. Lionel Monckton, Mr. Leslie



Private for George Edwardes. Esq.

Mignon of Moldavia.

Musical Comedy in 3 acts

Act I. - Stage of the Princes Theatre
Jassy at rehearsal

Act II Ball room at Lady Mainers

Act III The Casino. Dieppe.

Principal characters:

Mignon Kassilier (an opera singer) Miss Lily Elsie

Hon Algernon Brompton (an attaché) Mr Bertram Wallis

Prince Ghirka Mr. Robert Michaelis

Kavaross ... Mr. George Graves

Argument

Hon Algernon Brompton on a visit to the capital of Moldavia. Where the young reigning prince Ghirka has established a gorgeous private theatre of which Mignon is the star. Hon. Algy pretending to be a professional singer secures an engagement in the company but at the same time arouses the suspicions of Kavaross. the Chamberlain to the Prince who is aware that his master is head over ears in love with Mignon who is really of noble birth. Suddenly learning of the death of Lord Dulverton Algy flies with Mignon

A SCHEME FOR A MUSICAL COMEDY.

Stuart, Mr. Paul Rubens, or some other native composer, there is the difficulty of getting a fit company together which will attract the public. The outside manager cannot secure the services of Miss Lily Elsie, or Miss Constance Drever, or Miss Gertie Millar, or Miss Vincent, or Miss Dare. He may have some rare unknown *prima donna* up his sleeve, or he has to find one, as Mr. George Edwardes and others have done. And then there are the low comedians, Mr. George Graves, Mr. Wilkie Bard, Mr. Grossmith, Mr. Edmund Payne, and Mr. Alfred Lester. There is doubtless a supply of these in the provinces, if he knew exactly where to find it; only it has passed into an axiom amongst managers and theatrical speculators that a piece has to be intrinsically magnificent if it is to be presented by people unknown to London playgoers. If it is really a first-rate piece, with tunefu music, on its merits, then it may ultimately catch on, if it first pleases the critics. But there are exceptions even to this, as, for example, "The Waltz Dream," which, when it was first put on, somehow failed to draw, although it seemed to have everything in its favour—good book, good music, good cast, and was beautifully staged.

Perhaps, on the whole, if he be wise, the prospective manager will follow the taste of the moment and endeavour to get hold of a Continental success. Only here he requires great enterprise and keen judgment. Take the work of two German composers, Franz Lehar and Oscar Strauss. Five years ago he could have bought the English rights of a piece by the first-named for a hundred pounds. The other day an English manager, who wrote to Herr Lehar inquiring as to the possibilities of negotiating for a new piece, received a brief message: "Booked ahead until 1917. Are you prepared to pay ten thousand pounds down?"

Salaries have gone up in still larger proportion. A leading lady in musical comedy received, twenty years ago, about fifteen pounds weekly; whereas now she will earn, say, eighty-five pounds each week.

The manager who produces a modern play has not to face an enormous expenditure on

costumes and incidental effects. The former has grown to be a very heavy item since the days of the Amazon chorus, when the stage was filled with *figuranti* clad simply in tights. You can carry illusions on the stage to great lengths, but you can't make a cheap gown look the real thing, even on the boards. Fashionable frocks are expensive. In the case of "The Dollar Princess," in the first act there are thirty-five chorus-girls attired in dresses which cost from fifteen to thirty-five pounds apiece. There are thirty-five in Act II. and sixty-five in Act III. Some have two changes in a single act, and altogether one hundred and sixty dresses are worn, at a total cost of over three thousand pounds. This for the female chorus alone, although even masculine raiment is not to be had for nothing. Then there is the little matter of hats. In "The Dollar Princess" one hundred and five of these are worn, and they are the most expensive kind. When it comes to the principals, one lady's dress cost eighty pounds, and there are sixteen principal performers. Altogether some six thousand pounds was spent in clothes; another thousand pounds went in scenery, besides the bill for properties, furniture, and other details. In "The Earl and the Girl" there was a swing scene, during which eight pretty girls sat in swings lowered from the flies, being swung out by the male choristers into the auditorium. The swings were profusely ornamented by multi-coloured electric lights. It is said that this "effect" cost the management nearly a thousand pounds. One projected feature was a dance performed by a group of girls on the tops of a set of tables. The idea was that when the dancers' heels touched the tables, an electrical connection would be made and the whole would produce an astonishing effect of light. After twelve hundred pounds had been spent on the experiment, it was found unreliable and was withdrawn. Excessive prices are paid for properties, and in many cases unnecessarily expensive materials used for curtains, etc. An unbusiness-like manager often wastes a lot of money in unnecessary rehearsals with orchestra and supers.

Yet the craving is perpetually for novelty, and managers spend their lives on the look-out for some new attraction. One never quite knows what the public will take up; sometimes it is a Pavlova who will be the rage, at other times it may be a Greek comedy or a discussion by Mr. Bernard Shaw. Sometimes the manager cannot follow the fickle changes fast enough; and, if he is a manager of musical comedy, all he discovers immutable are a row of chorus girls, as like each other as peas in a pod. As to the profits, the average takings for a full house are between two and three hundred pounds for one performance. Daly's Theatre produces about two hundred and eighty pounds, and is nearly always filled. In this respect it is exceptional, because there the plays are always taken off as soon as there is any diminution in the bookings. Probably most of the London theatres may roughly be said to average rather more than half-full. Occasionally they are empty.

THE POPULAR LOW COMEDIAN—HE IS MOST ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS.

"NO WONDER THE BLASÉ MANAGER SEES A LOT OF CHORUS GIRLS AS LIKE AS PEAS FROM WHOM HE TRIES IN VAIN TO PICK A WINNER."

At one performance at a West-end theatre the sum of half a crown was taken, the only audience being holders of complimentary tickets. Quite recently seven shillings and sixpence was the sole taking at one performance at a West-end theatre.

So far we have only been dealing with one form of entertainment. There are many who hold that profusion characterizes them all, particularly Shakespeare, grand opera, and spectacle. "The sums," writes Sir Charles Wyndham, "spent by managers of dramatic entertainment are far beyond what they ought to be. Such expenditure now no longer leaves theatrical management on the basis of business, but makes it, on the contrary, simply a gambling operation. Indeed, we shall soon arrive, if we go on as we do, at a point when expenditure cannot possibly meet with anything but a loss."

Similarly, Mr. Martin Harvey writes:—

"What we think pleasure is a question of individual taste. The taste of the audience has been educated to the love of costly display. Much more refined pleasure could be gratified at probably half the cost. The question is, therefore, 'Is the taste of the public sufficiently educated to be gratified by a more highly refined and artistic pleasure?' I think it is."

We will assume the manager turns his attention to the production of a drama, comedy, or farce. It is safe to say that, save in the case of Shakespeare, there is no more money to be made out of tragedy or melodrama, and if he embarks his capital in Shakespeare, it must be done on such a scale of magnificence as has of recent years been exemplified at the Lyceum and His Majesty's Theatres. And even then the expenses will be found to do scarcely more than balance the receipts. The best investment is a good modern comedy of manners, like "The Walls of Jericho," "The Liars," "Lady Frederick," or "The Admirable Crichton." But even here, although he commission a first-rate dramatic writer, the chances of getting ten per cent. on his outlay are only one in ten. Here again critics and public are most exacting, and a comedy has to be excellent indeed to run a hundred nights. When it is very good, and runs a year or two, there is a lot of money made by the manager, in spite of the big salaries he has to pay to the performers, and a great deal more made by the author, who is collecting his five, eight, or ten per cent. on the gross takings, not merely of one company, but of several, in this kingdom, in America, and in the Colonies. It is, for example, computed that Mr. Barrie's income from his plays—chiefly, of course, from "Peter Pan"—is not less than fifty thousand pounds per annum. At one time Mr. Somerset Maugham had four plays running simultaneously in London, and all playing to good houses—a circumstance probably

without parallel in the history of the theatre. Therefore it is that the average manager may think he may be excused for spending money on scenic effects and dresses, in order to hide the artistic nakedness of his production.

"I venture to suggest," says Mr. Arthur Bourchier, "that no sum of money is ever spent amiss by the experienced manager on the right play. Some plays demand expensive mounting, other plays do not. There is no manager to-day who can accurately gauge whether a play possesses that subtle something which will ultimately attract the great mass of the public. Most managers of experience can generally tell whether a play has no chance whatever, and in my humble experience this has been a very consistent rule. Many a play is refused in the first instance by one or more managers, and is ultimately produced with great success; but the reasons for the refusal by the several aforesaid managers are not, when probed, refusals directed against the money-making chances of a play, but on the suitability of the play in question to the theatres which they happen to control. For instance, a man may be under contract, rightly or wrongly, to several expensive artistes, for whom there happen to be no parts in the play in question; or, again, the size of the theatre may be too large or too small to give the play its proper chance. Of course, there is always an exception to every rule; but I venture to express my belief in the Pope-like infallibility of the intelligent actor-manager as against the purely speculative manager, who is not an actor. And oh, my dear sir, do we not sometimes err on the side of the artistic conscience? We have been known to refuse a play because it grated against every artistic corpuscle in our blood!"

Farce still remains to our aspiring manager. A farce with only one or two scenes will cost but seven or eight hundred pounds to produce. But how few really good farces there are! And it is possible to spend a good deal of money in salaries and theatre-rent before one gets hold of such a one as "Charley's Aunt" or "Baby Mine." In fact, it is said that there is only one good farce produced every ten years. Yet the stage is strewn with the bodies of farces which were still-born, but which the managers went on presenting night after night for weeks, or even months, in the hope that they would somehow or other ultimately "catch on."

Sir Edward Moss. Mr. George Edwardes. Mr. Arthur Collins. Mr. Charles Frohman.

"MANAGERS ARE CONSTANTLY DISCUSSING THE ADVANTAGE AND THE EXPENSE OF A NOVELTY."

As to those gorgeous emporiums of pleasure which go by the name of music-halls, the money that is expended by their managers is rapidly passing into a proverb. True, it chiefly goes in salaries to performers who, like Mr. Harry Lauder, or Mlle. Genée, or Mme. Pavlova, or Miss Maud Allan, or Mr. Wilkie Bard, are special favourites of the public (Mr. Lauder can earn about seven hundred pounds a week); but there is also a large expenditure on ballet and spectacle. With a salary-list of three thousand pounds a

"ROUND THE WORLD"—AN ENORMOUSLY EXPENSIVE SCENE FROM THE EMPIRE BALLET.

week, one asks, how can it possibly pay? To this Sir Edward Moss replies :—

"I certainly cannot say that in my opinion anyone is expending sums of money large enough to prevent a profit being made on a production. It is inconsistent with even an elementary financial education. It depends entirely on the prospects in view and on the value of the production whether a large or a small sum of money should be utilized. No doubt each individual has his own ideas, but in connection with the London Hippodrome it has not been our plan to stint expenses in any way where we have had an opportunity to produce a spectacle which should warrant an elaborate *mise en scène*. Things are different to-day to what they were half a century ago. Music-halls are now not looked at askance as they were. The class of entertainment submitted to the public is higher than it has hitherto been, and more people are going in for this class of amusement than at any time before. Competition is much keener, and it goes without saying that more money has to be expended to cope with the said competition."

Mr. Dundas Slater, the manager of the Coliseum, is of opinion that the present-day expensive productions are required by the public, which has been educated up to a higher standard, and are better for all concerned.

After the initial cost of producing such a ballet as "Round the World" (which might be at least five thousand pounds), the weekly expenses at the Empire Theatre run as follows :—

	£
Ballet, chorus, etc.	360
Salaries in front of house	246
Wages, gas and electricity men ..	54
Wages, stage hands	310
Salaries, variety artistes	925
Orchestra	163
Wages, programme and cloak-room attendants	19
General incidentals	30
Expenses per annum—wages ..	£104,000
Rent, rates, and expenses ..	£ 44,000

The variation of music-hall artistes' wages is interesting. Some time ago a new performer, who is now well known, signed a contract at eight pounds per week, and renewed it at twelve pounds per week. Very shortly after, while still fulfilling this contract, he was also giving the same performance at other music-halls, at which he was paid forty and sixty pounds a week.

Can it be that not only is the whole system wrong, but that our managers are unbusiness-like?

"Apart from the varying requirements of different classes of productions," writes a keen theatrical observer, Mr. Fitzroy Gardner, "the business methods (or entire absence of them) of different managements (or mismanagements) have to be taken

into account. Where any one of four managers whom I could name would spend, say, eight thousand pounds on the production of a musical comedy or spectacular drama, either one of two others would do it equally well for six thousand pounds. And this applies proportionately to all plays. In the running of a play there is also a wide margin between the expenses of one manager and another. London theatres are seldom conducted on the business lines which would regulate an ordinary commercial undertaking. Actors and actresses are engaged in a hurry, and have to be paid what they ask. Scenery and dresses are often ordered without proper deliberation, or negotiation as to cost. Orders are frequently given verbally and not confirmed in writing. The "producer" or manager has a knack of changing his mind, and expensive alterations have to be made. The cost of the managerial staff in some houses would astound any man of business. I have no hesitation in saying that in the West-end theatres of London at least forty thousand pounds a year are frittered away, apart from what is lost by putting on plays with a four-to-one chance against their success. I could give instances of details—some astounding, others humorous—as to how money is spent recklessly. In some cases there is 'leakage' as well as waste. I have often been told that ordinary business methods cannot be applied to theatres. Those who maintain this (and I disagree with them entirely) are invariably among the most wasteful."

"Personally," writes Mr. Robert Courtneidge, whose musical comedy, "The Arcadians," has brought him in a small fortune, "I don't think the public I strive to cater for are likely to be attracted by mere profusion. Anyhow, I start out on a production with very vague ideas of what it may cost. I spend as I go along what is *necessary*, be it more or less. I never hesitate to spend lavishly if it is required, but I do not attempt to 'paint the lily,' etc. In fact, I think all one requires is common-sense and the desire to do all things well, and to steer clear of vulgar extravagance on one side and meanness on the other."

The great outstanding fact would seem to be that if less money were spent by the managers, if matters were put on a sounder business footing, theatres would be cheaper—less of a luxury to the masses than they are at present. Mr. Bernard Shaw's desire is that they should be as "cheap as a church"—that the whole nation should be able to flock regularly at least once a week to the theatre. As it is now, the only way managers will soon be able to recoup themselves will be by charging a guinea for stalls. Stalls were formerly five shillings. Think of the outcry that was caused when the Bancrofts raised the price of stalls at the old Prince of Wales's to half a guinea! Now, an average house is often half or three-quarters filled with "dead-heads," and the few have to pay for the many. Perhaps the new era of the National Theatre is going to change all this.

Mlle. Adeline Genée. Mr. Pelissier.

AT THE OPPOSITE POLES OF ART.

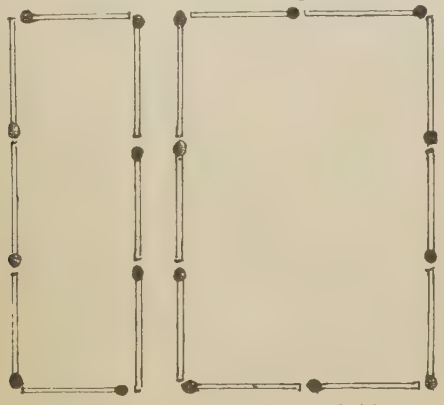
Photographs by Foulsham & Banfield, Prothero, Dover Street Studios, Illustrations Bureau, Rita Martin, and Geo. Newnes, Ltd.

PERPLEXITIES.

Puzzles and Solutions. By Henry E. Dudeney.

54.—A NEW MATCH PUZZLE.

In the illustration eighteen matches are shown arranged so that they enclose two spaces, one just twice as large as the other. Can you rearrange them (1) so as to enclose two four-sided spaces, one exactly



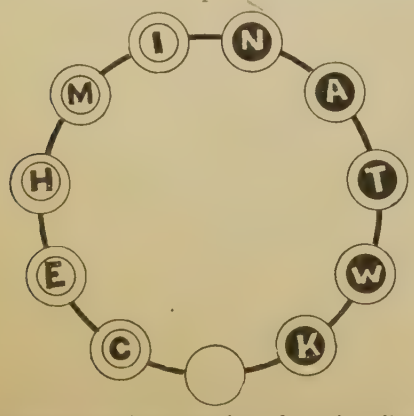
three times as large as the other, and (2) so as to enclose two five-sided spaces, one exactly three times as large as the other? All the eighteen matches must be fairly used in each case; the two spaces must be quite detached, and there must be no loose ends or duplicated matches.

55.—A TENNIS TOURNAMENT.

Four married couples played a "mixed double" tennis tournament, a man and a lady always playing against a man and a lady. But no person ever played with or against any other person more than once. Can you show how they could have all played together in the two courts on three successive days? This is a little puzzle of a quite practical kind, and it is just perplexing enough to be interesting.

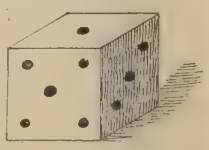
56.—THE TWICKENHAM PUZZLE.

In the illustration we have eleven discs in a circle. On five of the discs we place white counters with



black letters—as shown—and on five other discs the black counters with white letters. The bottom disc is left vacant. Starting thus, it is required to get the counters into order so that they spell the word "Twickenham" in a clock-wise direction, leaving the vacant disc in the original position. The black counters move in the direction that a clock-hand revolves, and the white counters go the opposite way. A counter may jump over one of the opposite colour if the vacant disc is next beyond. Thus, if your first move is with K, then C can jump over K. If then K moves towards E, you may next jump W over C, and so on. The puzzle may be solved in twenty-six moves. Remember a counter cannot jump over one of its own colour.

57.—CASTING THE DIE.



What are the odds against throwing one ace exactly in four throws with a single die? In other words, if I throw that single die four times in succession, what are the chances against the ace coming to the top once—and not more than once—in the four throws? It is curious how a simple question like this will set many people blundering.

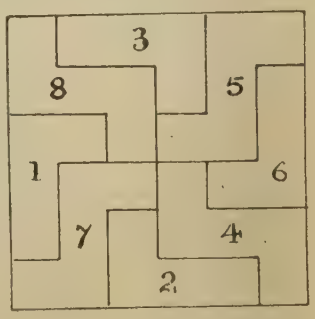
Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

51.—A NEW COUNTER PUZZLE.

Play as follows: 2—3, 9—4, 10—7, 3—8, 4—2, 7—5, 8—6, 5—10, 6—9, 2—5, 1—6, 6—4, 5—3, 10—8, 4—7, 3—2, 8—1, 7—10. The white counters have now changed places with the red ones, in eighteen moves, without breaking the conditions.

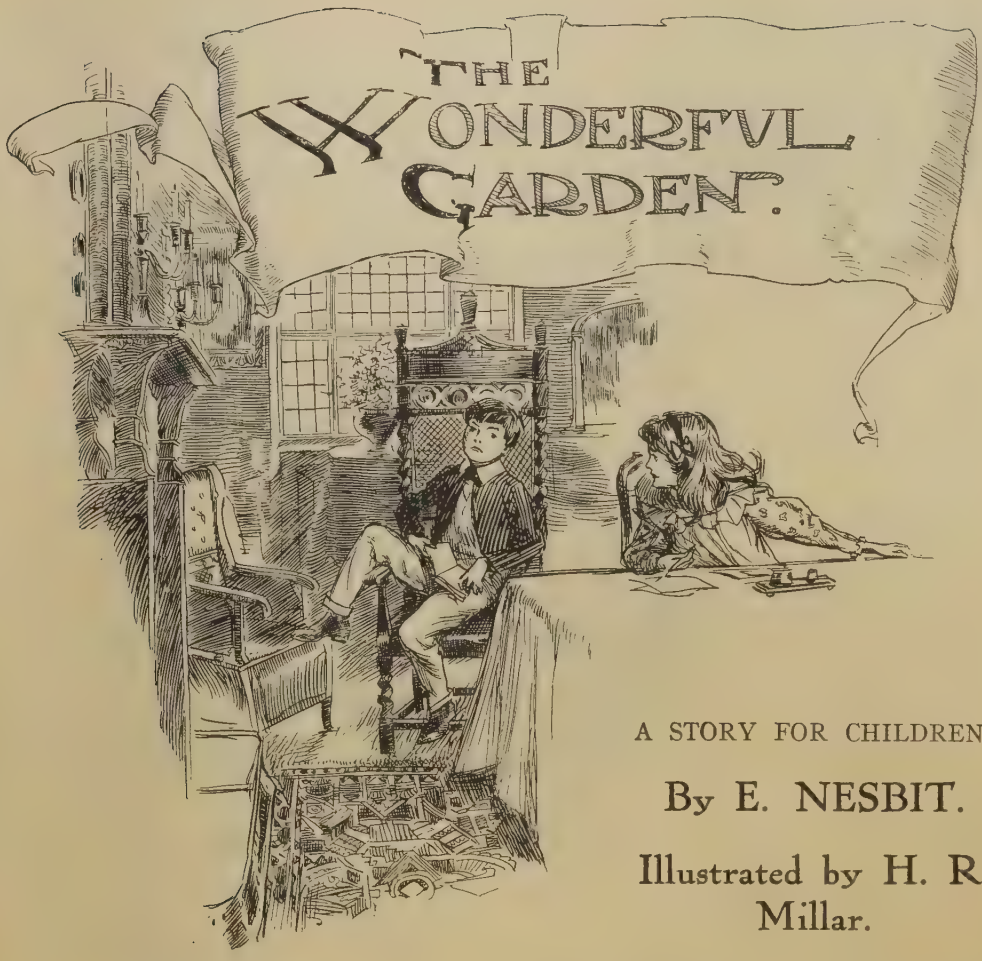
52.—A VENEER PUZZLE.

The eight pieces of veneer may be fitted together, as in the illustration, to form a perfect square, and the arrangement is symmetrical and pleasing.



53.—THE HONEST DAIRYMAN.

Whatever the respective quantities of milk and water, the relative proportion sent to London would always be three parts of water to one of milk. But there are one or two points to be observed. There must originally be more water than milk, or there will be no water in A to double in the second transaction. And the water must not be more than three times the quantity of milk, or there will not be enough liquid in B to effect the second transaction. The third transaction has no effect on A, as the relative proportions in it must be the same as after the second transaction. It was introduced to prevent a quibble if the quantity of milk and water were originally the same: for, though double "nothing" would be "nothing," yet the third transaction in such a case could not take place.



A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LE-O-PARD.

"WE simply must write to Aunt Emmeline," said Caroline, earnestly. "I've got three new pens and some scented violet ink. I got it at the shop yesterday; it's lovely."

"You write, too, Rupert," said Charles, kindly. "Put some Latin in; they'll love that."

But Rupert said he couldn't be bothered, and took down a book.

Caroline, looking up in an agony of ignorance as to the way you spelt asafœtida, saw that Rupert's eyes were fixed in a dismal stare on the portrait above the mantelpiece—the portrait of Dame Eleanour.

He was looking at it as though he did not see it, and yet Charlotte could not help saying, "Isn't she splendid? *She* knew all about spells and things. It's her books we do it out of—at least, most of it."

"If she knew all about them, she knew what rotten rot they were," said Rupert. "You never try to do anything with your spells except the things that would happen just the same without your spelling."

"What's that about my spelling?" asked Caroline.

"I say your magic isn't real."

"We saw you when you were invisible," Caroline began, laying down her pen.

"Yes, I know," said Rupert; "but if it's really real, why don't you do something with it that can't really happen *in puris naturalitatibus*?—that means just naturally. Why don't you bring back Mrs. Wilmington's cat that's lost? Or find my Koh-i-noor pencil. Then there's a thing in that book Mr. Penfold's got. He told me about it. You make a wax image of your enemy and stick pins into it, and every time you stick in a pin your enemy feels a pain in the part you stick the pin into."

"How awfully wicked!" said Caroline, in an awestruck voice.

"Rupert wouldn't do it, of course," said Charles. "He's only talking."

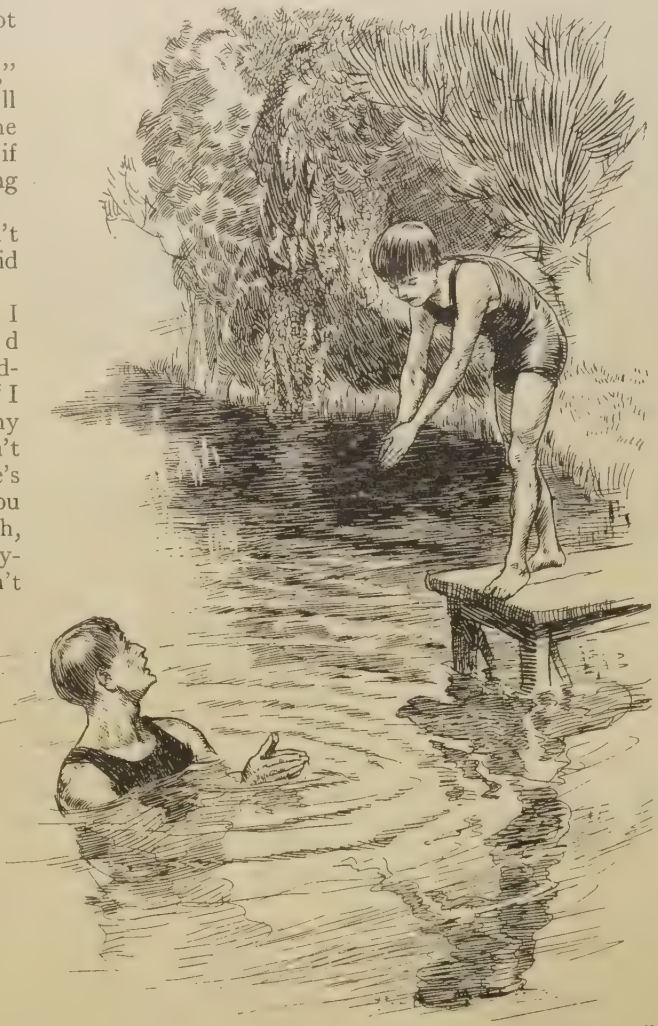
"How do you know I wouldn't?" said Rupert, savagely. "Next time you have a pain in your leg, Caroline, you'll think it's growing-pains, but really it'll be me, sticking a long hat-pin into the wax image I've secretly made of you."

Caroline got up.

"Come, Char," she said; "we'll go and sit in the drawing-room if Rupert's going on like this."

"He doesn't mean it," said Charles again.

"Of course I don't," said Rupert, and suddenly smiled. "I don't know why I said it. Don't be silly. There's lots of things you could try, though, and not hurt anyone. Why don't you——" He looked vaguely round the room, and his eyes lighted once more on the portrait. "Why don't you make *that* come to life? If she was a witch her picture ought to be good for that, anyhow."



"THE ONLY THING RUPERT SEEMED TO CARE FOR WAS SWIMMING."

"I wish we could," said all the children together, with deep earnestness.

"Well, do it, then," said Rupert. "That's the sort of thing to make me believe, not the duffing things you've kept on doing ever since I've been here."

There was a silence. But Charlotte's mind busied itself then and later, in and between other thoughts, with the question of what was the matter with Rupert and whether something couldn't be done to help him.

For there was no doubt of it. Rupert wasn't at all what they had first thought him. Sometimes, it is true, he would be as jolly as you need wish a boy to be. He would start new games and play them in the most amusing and satisfactory way. But always, sooner or later, and generally sooner, the light of life seemed to go out of him, and he would seem suddenly to be not only tired of the game, but angry with everybody.

Rupert grew grumpier and grumpier as the days went on, and seemed to care less and less for being with the three C.'s. He would go for long walks by himself, and seemed to prefer to be with William, who "put up" with him, or even with Mrs. Wilmington, who adored him, to being with the children.

The only thing Rupert seemed truly and constantly to care for was swimming. He went down to the river with Mr. Penfold almost every day, or met him at the bathing-place, and they swam together. With Mr. Penfold Rupert was nearly always at his best, perhaps because Mr. Penfold never seemed to notice it when he wasn't.

The village was growing more and more busy and excited as the day drew near when Lord Andor's coming-of-age was to be celebrated by what the people called a Grangaileranfeat. This was to be held in Lord Andor's park and in certain meadows adjoining. There were to be roundabouts and cocoanut-shies, and shooting-galleries, and a real circus with a menagerie and

performing elephants, and educated seals. All free. The children looked forward longingly to the day. Lord Andor had sent them cards with his mother's name and his on them in print, and the name of each child in writing, requesting the pleasure of their company on the occasion of Lord Andor's twenty-first birthday.

And then, the very day before *the* day, when the roundabouts had arrived and been set up, and the menagerie was howling invitingly in its appointed field, the cup of joy was dashed, as Charlotte said, into little bits. Lady Andor slipped on an orange-pip and broke her ankle, and the festivities were postponed until September.

"There's many a pip twixt the cup and the lip," said Charlotte; and Caroline said, "Oh, bother!"

Rupert said nothing. He had been invited too, of course, and had, at moments, seemed pleased. Now he just took his cap and went out and came home late for tea. The three C.'s learned with feelings of distress, mingled with anger, that Rupert had been to the menagerie by himself, and had seen all the beasts; and that he had also witnessed a performance of the circus people which they had thought it worth while to give to such of the villagers as cared to pay for their amusements.

"You might have told us you were going," said Charles.

"You could have gone if you'd wanted to," said Rupert.

"Never mind, Charles," said Caroline; "we'll ask the uncle to take us to-morrow."

"They're off to-morrow," said Rupert; "that's why I went to-day."

But the circus, as it turned out, was not off next day. An accident had happened. Something was missing, and the circus could not go on its travels till that something was found.

"I don't know what it is," said Harriet, when she told them about it at breakfast; "but they've lost something they set store by. Some says it's an improving seal, and others says it's a boar-conjector-snake, and Poad told my gentleman friend it was the white-eyed Kaffir made a bolt for freedom and India's coral strand, where he was stole from when a babe; but I don't know the rights of it. They sent for Poad. My gentleman friend'll know all about it next time I see him."

"When shall you see him again?" Charles asked.

"I can see him whenever I've a mind," said Harriet, proudly. "I'm not one of those as has to run after their gentleman friends."

"I do wonder what it is," Charlotte said. "Do see your friend as soon as you can and ask him, won't you, Harriet? I do hope it's not snakes or bears. You'll be sure to tell us directly you know, won't you?"

It was from William, however, that they heard what it was that the circus had really lost.

"It's a tame le-o-pard," said William—"him with the spots that you can't change and the long tail."

"I know," said Charlotte; "there's a leopard's skin in the drawing-room. Very spotty they are. And fierce, too, I believe. Oh, William, I do hope it won't come this way."

"There's something about it in the book," said Caroline, who, as usual, had her magic books under her arm. She found the place and read: "Leopard's-bane: Its Government and Virtues"—quite a long piece. When she had done William said: "Thank you very much. Quite pretty, ain't it?" And Rupert said it was all nonsense.

"But it *won't* come this way, will it?" Charlotte repeated.

"It's a tame one," said William, grinning. "At least, that's the character it's got from its last place. But it won't be any too tame for Poad, I expect. I hear he's got the job of catching of it. And serve him right, too."

"Oh, why?" asked Charlotte.

"Because," said William, shortly, and was told not to be cross about nothing. "'Tain't nothing, then," he said; "'twas the way he acted about my dog-licence, and the dog only two months over puppy-age, when no licence is taken nor yet asked."

"I don't fancy Poad much myself," said Rupert. "He needn't have been so keen about catching me."

"Now, that's where you're wrong," said William. "Hunting of you, that was no more than Poad's duty; and if he set about it like a jackape—well, some is born silly and can't help it; and why blame the man? But the dog, 'e worn't Poad's duty. He exceeded about the dog, Poad did, and I don't bear malice, but I'll be even with him yet about that dog."

"How?" asked Rupert.

"Oh, I'll find a way," said William, carelessly. "No hurry. Acts like that what Poad did about my Pincher, they always come home to roost, them acts do. Now, then, Miss Charlotte, leave that saddle-soap

alone, and get along into the garden. The gates 'as been locked since eight this morning, and you're to go through the secret way to-day, and not to go outside the garden, because of that old speckled le-o-pard."

The three C.'s went; but Rupert lingered beside William, fingering the bright buckles of the harness, and passing the smooth reins slowly through his fingers.

For some time the three C.'s were very busy in the garden, gathering heart-shaped green leaves and golden, fragile, daisy-like flowers.

"I never thought," said Caroline, earnestly, opening the brown book, and sitting down on the terrace-steps with a sheaf of green and yellow beside her, "that we should need it when I read about it in the 'Language of,' and in the Medicine Book. Look here, it says: 'It is under Apollo, and the flowers and leaves thereof all leopards and their kind do fear and abhor. Wherefore, if it be ftrewn in the paths thefe fearful beafts do frequent, they may not pafs, but fhall turn again and go each to his own place in all meeknefs and fubmifsion. Indeed, it hath been held by the ancients—aye, and by philofophers of our own times—that in this herb lieth a charm to turn to water the hearts of thefe furious fpotted great cats, and to loofe the ftrings of their tongues, fo that they fpeak in the fpeech of men, uttering ftrange things and very wondrous. But of this the author cannot fpeak certainly, fince the leopard is not native to this land, unlefs it be in Northumberland and Wales, where all wild things might well be hidden.'

"So you see," said Caroline.

But Charlotte said it was all very well; only how were they to get the bane to the leopard?

"It isn't as if we were allowed free," she pointed out. "I wish they hadn't been so careful. The leopard would never have hurt us as long as we carried the bane; and we could have surrounded it, like snakes with ash-leaves, and it would have had to surrender."

"And perhaps it would have talked to us and followed us like tame fawns," suggested Charlotte, "or Una. Only hers was a lion."

"Nonsense," said Charles; "you know you'd have been afraid."

"I shouldn't," said Charlotte.

"You would," insisted Charles.

"And now you're both exactly like Rupert," said Caroline. "And the leopard wandering about unbaned while you're wrangling. You're like Nero and Rome."

Twenty minutes had passed before peace was restored, and the leopard's-bane lay drooping in the sun, the delicate gold and green heaps of it growing flatter and flatter.

"Well, then," said Charles, suddenly, "if you're not afraid, let's go. No one's forbidden us to, except William."

"I will if you will," said Charlotte, turning red.

"So will I," said Caroline, turning pale.

"Rupert said it was nonsense about the leopard's-bane when you read it just now."

"That doesn't make it nonsense," said Charlotte, sharply.

"But suppose you meet it?"

"You can't, if you keep to the road. Leopards get into trees. They never walk about in roads like elephants do. Not even when the circus-man is moving. It's serious what we're going to do," said Caroline, "and what'll people say about it depends how it turns out. If we parrylize the leopard and save the village, we shall be heroines like——"

"And heroes," said Charles.

"Like Joan of Arc and Phillipa who sucked the poison out of the burgesses of Calais."

"And if we don't put the stuff in the right place, or the leopard doesn't take any notice of it, they'll just say we were disobedient."

"And suppose we meet the leopard face to face?"

"It's a *tame* leopard," said Caroline, in a faltering voice. "Oh, I don't want to go. I really am frightened. I don't mind owning up. I am. I'm so frightened I think we ought to go. I don't want to so dreadfully, that I'm sure it's right for me to go. But I wish you and Charles would stay here. Suppose the leopard came over the wall and there was no one here to cope with it?"

She was very pale and she trembled. And when the others, without hesitation, said, "Not much we don't!" she certainly breathed more easily.

"Come on, then," she said. "We'll strew a little here because of the gardeners. Oh, no; of course, the roots will make it all safe here. The gate's locked; we must go through the secret passage, and then creep through the stable-yard and out along the garden wall, so that the Wilmington doesn't see us. And then out by the deserted lodge."

They gathered up the fading armfuls of leopard's-bane and made for the arbour that led to the tunnel. Inside the door they lighted the candle, closed and bolted the door as they had been told to, and went carefully down the steps and along the secret passage. And as they went they heard something

moving in the darkness that lay thick beyond the little wavering light of their candle.

They stopped and listened. They heard the sound of breathing, and the next moment they saw, vaguely, in the almost darkness, something four-footed, spotted, furry, creeping along the passage towards them. It uttered a low, fierce, snarling growl.

"Throw it down," said Caroline, casting her flowers from her. "It can't pass it. It can't."

A heap of tangled, crushed leaves and

"Don't, oh, don't!" said Caroline. And to the leopard, who had not moved, she said, with wild courage, "Down, sir! Lie down!"

The leopard lay down, flat—flatter than you would think a leopard *could* lie.

"It understands," said Charlotte.

"Oh, yes." Caroline's voice trembled as much as the hand that held the candlestick. "It does. Poor pussy! Poor leopard, then."

A faint rumbling sound came from the crouching heap of spotted fur.

"I believe it's trying to purr," whispered

"THE NEXT MOMENT THEY SAW SOMETHING FOUR-FOOTED, SPOTTED, FURRY, CREEPING ALONG THE PASSAGE TOWARDS THEM."

flowers was all that there was now between the children and the leopard.

"It can't pass it. It can't," said Caroline again, in an agonized whisper. Yet none of the children dared to turn and fly. Charlotte had remembered what she had heard of quelling wild animals by the power of the human eye, and was trying, almost without knowing that she tried, to meet the eye of this one. But she could not. It held its head down close to the ground and kept quite still. Everyone felt it was impossible to turn their backs on the creature. Better to face it. If they turned and ran—well, the door at the end of the passage was bolted; and if the flower-spell should fail, then, the moment their backs were turned, the leopard might—with one spring——

"Oh, I wish we hadn't," said Charles, and burst into tears.

Caroline. "Of course, leopard's purrs *would* be different."

"Give a paw, then," she said, very shakily. And the leopard lifted a ragged-looking fore-foot. But even Caroline had not the courage to reach out a hand towards it.

"Go to sleep, good dog, then," she said, in a distracted whisper. "Go to sleep, go by-by, good little leopard, then."

The leopard curled up and lay quite still.

"It's all right, I tell you," said Caroline. "Stop snivelling, Charles; I knew the leopard's-bane would do it. Now let's go back backwards, very slowly, and if it moves I'll speak to it again."

Very slowly, still striving to keep their eyes on the leopard, they retreated. They had not gone three steps before they heard it move. They stopped.

"Lie down!" said Caroline. And then,

to their mingled horror, wonder, delight, surprise, dismay, and satisfaction, a voice answered them—a curious, choked, husky voice.

"Leopard stay still," it answered; "little lady not be frightened. Leopard like flowers. Leopard quite good."

"Is it?" said Caroline, speaking as well as she could through the beating of her heart. "Is it the leopard speaking?"

"Ess, little missy," said the choked voice. "Pretty flowers loose leopard's tonguey, make him talky. Leopard tell a secret. Little ladies sow seeds, pinky seeds, hearty seeds, the right day, the right way, and see what come up. Run away now. Leopard done talky. He go sleepy by-by. So long!"

None of them ever knew how they got to the end of the tunnel, got the bolts undone, got the door shut and bolted again, and stood in the dusky arbour looking in each other's paper-white faces.

Charlotte made two steps into the sunlight and threw herself face downwards on the path. Her shoulders heaved. Charles was still weeping without moderation or concealment. Caroline stood shivering in the sunshine.

"But we've got to get back," she said. "It's all right this side, because of the leopard's-bane. But if somebody came behind the leopard's-bane, from the house, you know? We must climb the wall and get to the house and warn them. Get up, Char. Charles, if you're ever going to be a man, be one now. There'll be plenty of time to howl when it's all over. We must climb the wall somehow."

One leaves the children in the garden, a locked door between them and the leopard, trying to find a way of climbing a ten-foot wall. No gardener was to be found and the gates were locked.

"We must get over," Caroline kept saying. "Oh, we must, we must! The charm worked perfectly. If we can only get to the other end of the tunnel and throw in some more bane we shall have done the great deed. Try again, Charles. I'll give you a leg up. We *must* get over. Try again."

One leaves Charles trying.

Now, although the three C.'s firmly believed that the magic of the green and yellow flowers subdued the leopard and caused it to speak—in a sort of language that somehow recalled the far-off speech of their ayah in India—I cannot quite expect you to believe this. And I feel that I must delay no longer to tell you what it is you *can* believe. To do this we must go back to Rupert, whom we left with William in the harness-room, fingering the bright buckles and drawing the long, smooth reins through his fingers.

"I say, William," he said, "couldn't we play a little trick on that Poad? There's a leopard-skin in the drawing-room. If I got a couple of pillows, and a needle and thread?"

"Eh?" said William, staring at him. Then suddenly he smacked his leg and laughed aloud. "You've hit it this time, Master Rupert," he said; "blessed if you 'aven't. You go along in and get the skin. Careful now, because of Mother Wilmington."

"The drawing-room's locked," said Rupert, "and I don't want to tell the others."

"The drawing-room windows isn't," said William. "We'll watch our time, and I'll make a back for you. An' never you mind about pillows. Straw's good enough stuffing. An' don't forget the needle and cotton. I expect you'll find some lady's working-box in the drawing-room to get *them* out of."

Rupert, once safely landed in the drawing-room, found the leopard-skin easily enough, but the needle and cotton were not so quickly discovered. He found a work-table, indeed, made of satinwood, inlaid with ivory and lined with faded red velvet, where were reels of silk and flat ivory winders with thread on them, but all the needles were red with rust and fast embedded in their cushions and cases. He looked round. None of the cabinets looked as though they held needles. And, besides, what was the use of finding more rusty needles? One rusty needle was as useful, or rather as useless, as fifty could be. He thought of using the blind-cords instead of cotton, but they were too thick, and one could not push them through the leopard-skin without tearing it. Then he saw the golden quiet harp standing in its far corner. Its strings, perhaps? But he did not know how to unstring a harp, and when he touched one of its fine wires, just the thing for sewing with without a needle, it gave out the thin, sweet ghost of a note of music, faint indeed, but loud enough to warn him of the cry it could, and would, give if he attempted violence. The harp quivered under his hands as he gently let the string go, and something rattled. It was the lid of a sort of box in the pedestal of the harp.

"Perhaps they kept spare string there," Rupert thought, and opened the lid.

"They," it seemed, had kept spare strings here, and here the spare strings still lay, coiled neatly in little round boxes. Rupert opened several, and, choosing the thinner strings, put them in his pocket. One box

rattled dryly in his hand, and when he opened it there were no strings, only a number of odd flat, pinkish, heart-shaped seeds. On the box was written, "Seed of the F of H D. Sow only in the way and on the day."

He put its lid on and thought, then, no more of the box. But afterwards he remembered it.

And now, with the leopard-skin in his arms and the wires in his pockets, Rupert went cautiously to the window. Yes, all was safe, so William's signal told him. He dropped the bright skin into William's hands, and himself dropped to the ground.

"I've thought of something better than straw," he said, when he and William and the leopard-skin were alone together in the harness-room. And William, when the new thought was explained to him, slapped his leg harder and laughed more thoroughly than before.

Rupert had only just entered the secret passage, his first match had just gone out, when he heard the children at the other end. He went towards them, fully meaning to explain what sort of leopard he was, and what sort of joke—he called it a joke to himself—he and William had arranged to play upon Poad. But when he heard them speak and saw the showers of leopard's-bane fall on the flags of the passage, he, as he put it later, "played up." And when the children had gone he laughed softly to himself and began to think what would be the best spot in the tunnel to wait for Poad in. He had noticed by the light of that first match an arched recess, the one, you remember, where the children stored their sacks of wet rose-leaves the night they played at Rosicurians and cured Rupert. He would hide in this, and then, when Poad came along, he would jump out at him with that snarl which had sounded so well when he met the children.

He waited till the garden-door was locked, and then felt for his matches. He could not find them. He must have dropped them when he was pretending to the children. He felt along the floor, but there were no matches to be found. Never mind, he could feel his way in the dark. He knew exactly where the arch was. To the left, about three-quarters of the way down the passage. He stood up and laid his hand upon the wall, walked forward till he felt the corner of the recess, and stooped to curl himself up in it and wait for Poad. He put his hand out to steady himself as he sat down, and his hand touched not the stone floor, but soft, warm fur. And not dry, hard fur like that which he himself wore, sewn tightly round him with harp-strings, but living fur, on a living creature. He drew back his hand, and a cold sweat of horror broke out on his forehead, and the little hairs on the back of his neck seemed to move by themselves. His hand still felt the dreadful warm softness of that fur. It almost seemed to him that he had felt the spots on it.

"Oh, I wish I hadn't!" said Rupert to himself, as so many of us have said when it was too late to say anything. "Oh, I *wish* I hadn't!"

He stood perfectly still in the mockery of his sewn-on leopard-skin, waiting for the real leopard to move or to settle down. Perhaps it would settle down? The leopard must have crept in when the door into the garden was opened in readiness for the children to pass through. It must have gone to sleep there, and perhaps he had not roused it.

"Oh, why didn't I go with the others?" Rupert thought. And then a good thought came to him. "If I had," he told himself, "I should have been out there, and they wouldn't have met me and turned back, and then they might have found the real leopard, and it might have jumped on them. I'm glad it's only me."

This good thought came to him as he rose up and steadied himself by the wall. Then in an instant all thoughts were drowned in a flood of terror, and Rupert found himself almost running, feeling his way by the wall towards the house entrance. If he could only get out before the leopard was up and after him! He reached the end of the passage. The door at the foot of the stairs was shut and locked. He was alone there in the dark, with a locked door at each end of the passage. He crouched down by the door. In spite of his agony of fear, he had enough sense not to beat on the door and scream for help—which was, of course, his first mad impulse.

"Keep quiet," he kept telling himself. "Someone *must* come soon. If you keep quiet, the leopard will go on sleeping, perhaps. The children will open the garden-door when they hear the dinner-bell; then you can get out. If you make a row the leopard will wake up and come for you."

So he crouched and waited. But no one came. Then suddenly he remembered. When the children heard the dinner-bell they would come down the passage. They would find the real leopard. It would certainly wake. His own feelings about the leopard now made him certain that the children, when they were safe in the sunshine, would see that what talked to them, dressed in a leopard's skin,

could only have been a human being dressed up. Most likely they knew already who it was. So they would come back without fear, come back to find him, Rupert, and would find *that*.

Then Rupert did what was really an heroic thing. He stood up, and, as quickly as he could, began to feel his way back along the side of the passage farthest from the arched recess. He would go to the garden-door, and when the children opened it he could prevent their coming in. To do this he must pass the leopard.

A warm, delicious glow stole through him. This was worth it. Better than crouching like a coward at the far side, and letting those children come laughing and talking down the passage to meet *that*, savage from a sudden awakening. He crept quietly along. No sound broke the black silence. He reached the flight of steps, gained the other door, sat down on the top step, and waited.

Nothing had stirred in the silence.

"Anyhow," said Rupert, "I feel safer at the top of the stair than at the bottom."

Rupert will never know how long he sat there in the darkness. The cracks in the door which showed as pale vertical streaks were his only comfort. He tried to get off the leopard's skin, but the harp-strings were too strong. It seemed to him that he had been there a week.

There were voices, many voices, Charlotte's voice high above the others. Rupert hoped the leopard was too far away to hear; but how could he know where the leopard was? It might have crept quite close to him on its padded, noiseless feet, and he would never have known. It might be within a yard of him now.

Rupert understood in that hour what sort of practical joke it was that he had prepared for the policeman.

"Because, of course," said Rupert, "I should have been just as dreadful for Poad as *that* is for me. He'd have thought I was It."

The voices and footsteps came nearer. They were talking outside.

"Best shoot it when it rushes out at us. I've got a revolver," said Poad. And a cold shiver ran down Rupert's back. Suppose he had met Poad alone in that dark passage as he had planned!

"Let me get at him with the garden-fork," said another voice, the gardener's.

Then another, a strange voice this time:—

"Don't hurt the beast. It's valuable. An' it's tame, don't I tell you? You leave be. Stand back; I'll tackle him."

Rupert wretchedly wondered how he was to be tackled. Also how near the real leopard really was. He decided that a little noise more or less couldn't matter now. He tapped at the door and cried:—

"Let me out. It's Rupert."

But his words were drowned in the chorus of alarm that arose when he knocked at the door. And the leopard? In the midst of the babel of voices a bolt was drawn, the door opened. Rupert sprang out and turned to shut the door. But his feet and arms and head were entangled in strings, and he fell to the ground.

"It's me; it's Rupert," he shouted. "Shut the door! The real leopard's inside."

"Why," said the leopard's owner, he who had thrown a net over Rupert, "it's a beastly boy, dressed up!" He spoke in tones of deep disgust.

There was a crowd of people. The three C.'s had managed to scale the wall by means of a pear tree. They had brought back William, a prey to secret laughter, and the leopard's owner, and a dozen other people. A score of hands helped to loose Rupert from the net.

"Oh, I don't know. I did it for a lark. To take a rise out of someone. But I've been paid out. The leopard's in there. I touched it, in the dark."

Sensation!

"There," said William to the policeman, "I told you half an hour ago there was a good chance the beast 'ad taken cover in the passage, and you would have it you see 'is tail up a tree somewhere and wouldn't go down."

"I certainly thought I see 'is tail," said Poad, scratching his ear; "and this gentleman's pal and half-a-dozen others is after 'im now, down by the other lodge. But perhaps it wasn't really 'is tail. In fact, it couldn't be, if the animal's in here like what the young gentleman says it is."

"I tell you the leopard's in here—now," said Rupert. "Oh, get me out of this beastly skin, somebody."

William unlaced him and he stepped out, a pale boy in shirt and knickerbockers.

"In there now, is he?" said the leopard's keeper, rudely taking no notice of Poad; "then, if someone'll get a lantern or two, we'll go in and get him."

Someone got a lantern or two—it was William, in point of fact—the lanterns happened to be ready in the summer-house.

The keeper went down the steps.

"On the right-hand side?" he said, quite

unconcernedly. And Rupert said, "Yes, to the right."

William and three other men followed warily, but to most of the party it seemed best to remain by the door. Five people and a net were surely enough to catch one leopard. But everyone crowded round the door, and some even went down a few steps, bending over to catch the first sounds of anything that might be happening.

All of a sudden a sound came from the dark passage below, and the listeners started back — a strange sound, the sound of long, loud laughter. It echoed and re-echoed through the vaulted passage, coming nearer and nearer. The crowd drew back.

Out came the leopard-keeper, laughing, with his net; out came William, laughing, with his pitchfork; out came Poad, half laughing and half angry.

"What is it? What is it?" said everyone outside. And for a moment none of those from inside could get breath to answer.

"What is it?" they asked again, and at last William answered:—

"Mrs. Wilmington's old cat! Gone in there to have her kittens in peace away from the children. They've caught your little bit all right," he said to the leopard-keeper. "Look!" He pointed to something white among the trees beyond the wall. "I told Bill to run up a signal if they found the rest of him where Poad said he'd seen his spotted tail."

"Did you know that before we went in?" Poad asked, sternly.

"Course I did," said William, his hands on his knees and his ruddy face deeply creased with the joke. "You wouldn't have catched me going in there without I'd known where my lord was, him and his spotted tail. I thought it was Master Rupert up to some more of his larks, I did. I wasn't a-going to spoil sport."

"OH, GET ME OUT OF THIS BEASTLY SKIN, SOMEBODY."

"You 'aven't 'eard the last of this."

"No more ain't you," said William; "so don't you think it, James Poad. You that believed one tale when you'd seen the other. You that wouldn't believe the sworn evidence of your own eyes and a spotted tail!"

(To be continued.)

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A CRICKET CURIOSITY.

CRICKET curiosities are by no means rare, but the one shown in the accompanying photograph is worthy of record. It shows the extraordinary way in which a stump, when hit by a ball during net practice, stuck in the net immediately behind. The stump turned a complete somersault, and remained fixed firmly in the net until taken down.

CARVED FROM MEAT BONES.

THE history of this crucifixion, which was bought by my great-grandmother from French prisoners detained at Portsmouth during the Napoleonic wars, is very interesting. These prisoners carved this and similar images from the bones obtained in their meat

rations. The cock, the spear, the dice with which "lots were cast." and several other things are all represented. Considering the rough tools at their disposal — clasp-knives at best — the ingenuity shown is remarkable. The two figures at the sides are cut from long bones, and when seen from behind show the spongy substance from the centre of the shaft. — Mr. F. R. Walshe, 10, Thayer Street, Manchester Square, W.

A CANINE POSTMAN.

AT the little town of Brighton, on the Baltimore and Ohio South-Western Railway, a few miles from the busy city of Cincinnati, there is a clever dog-postman. Jack, as he is called, belongs to Mrs. John Pollock, the postmistress at Brighton. Once a day the mail train, as it thunders by, drops a bag of letters for distribution in the locality. For many years the postmistress trudged to the railway to catch the letters as they were tossed from the train, always accompanied

by her dog Jack. One day she sprained her ankle and was unable to leave her home. She was in a dilemma, when Jack, by his barking and actions, made it clear that he was anxious to go off and bring home the letters. He was accordingly sent. He waited there patiently until the train came along, and as soon as the mail-bag was thrown out he grabbed it in his mouth and carried it home. Since that day he has always fetched the letters, never failing to arrive at the line a few minutes before the train. Neither has he ever lost his valuable burden. Photograph by Mr. J. R. Schmidt, Cincinnati, Ohio.—Mr. H. J. Shepstone, 35, Amner Road, Clapham Common, S.W.

FISHING WITH CORMORANTS.

OF the many strange methods of fish-catching practised in various parts of the world, one of the most curious is the manner in which cormorants are used for this purpose in China. Each bird has a ring put round its throat, which prevents it swallowing any fish it may pursue, while a long fishing-rod arrangement is used to catch hold of the string attached to the bird's leg, thus enabling all fish caught to be quickly secured.—Mr. Gordon Birchenall, Athenæum, Princess Street, Manchester.

SCULPTURING EXTRAORDINARY

FROM time to time there have been published in these Curiosity columns specimens of the extraordinarily clever work of untutored sculptors, and if a further addition to this "born, not made" category is permissible, this should hold its own with exceptional ease.

A close scrutiny of this wonderful stone creation, with its subtle lines and varied testimony to delicate workmanship and handling, would scarcely assist one to the belief that it was all accomplished by an ordinary working blacksmith. Such a truth, however, stands to be recorded. The "chiseller" in question was one William Gemmell, who resided in Eaglesham, Lanarkshire, Scotland, and during the progress of his sculpturing labours he actually received sittings from the original. The latter was a well-known Glasgow mendicant, who was, some forty years ago, popularly known as "Auld Hawkie."—Mr. James A. King, 18, Muir Street, Motherwell, Scotland.

A REMARKABLE PIECE OF CARPENTRY.

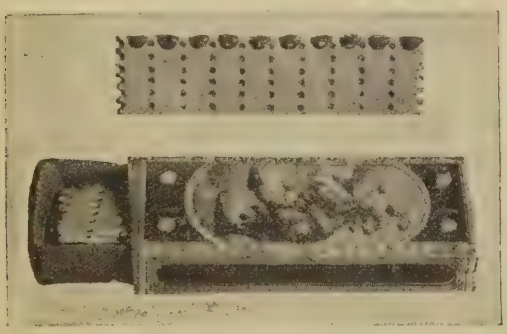
A DANISH carpenter living in Ginneken, near Breda, who has converted a portion of the trunk of a fir tree into the mammoth fan here shown, has accomplished a piece of work on which he is heartily to be congratulated. The portion of trunk from which the fan was made was two yards seven inches in length, and, as will be seen, the laths into which it has been divided are so thin that they appear but little thicker than paper. The laths are kept apart and formed into the shape of a fan by means of little wooden wedges. This fan attracted a deal of attention at the Agricultural Exhibition at The Hague, where it drew the attention of our beloved Queen-Mother, who expressed delight at seeing it and complimented the maker upon his skill. The carpenter is the left-hand one of the three figures.—Mr. A. P. Jansen, 64A, Spoorsingel, Rotterdam, Holland.

WIRELESS MESSAGES SENT FROM KITES.

AN interesting feature of the Los Angeles Aviation Meet was the use of Si Perkins's man-carrying kites for the transmission of wireless messages. This experiment is not only an entertaining novelty, but has a very real value both in war and peace, as, by use of a kite, an aerial wire can be sent up several hundred feet within a few moments. In a campaign this device might be of the greatest value. Calls were sent from various parts of Southern California, from San Diego, Catalina Island, and from ships at sea. Roy Cheminant, operating on the field, sent out a clear, strong call from the "wireless" kite which attracted the attention of operators in every direction. The kites as man-carrying devices have proved a success, Perkins having made several ascents on the cable during the aviation meet, reaching an altitude of three hundred and eighty-five feet. This feature of the device would also be of great value in warfare, as an aerial scout could be sent up at short notice, and would form a very difficult mark for sharp-shooters while making observations. Unless the man or the cable were hit there would be no serious mishap even if the string of kites were punctured by bullets. The photograph shows the inventor, Si Perkins, depending from a string of hexagonal kites. The lower end of the stout cable is anchored to a post in the ground, and the seat on which he rides can be raised or lowered by means of two smaller ropes and pulleys.—Mr. C. L. Edholm, 4,624, Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California.

HEATING AN ORCHARD.

IN the Grand Valley of Colorado, a famous fruit section, the growers have undertaken the gigantic task of heating their orchards in order to save their fruit from Jack Frost. The accompanying photograph shows the orchard heaters, or smudge-pots as they are known, burning at full blast. When the mercury showed thirteen degrees of frost this spring, these heaters, to the number of seventy-five thousand, were lighted all over the valley, and it resulted in the raising of the temperature ten degrees and the saving of a two-million-dollar fruit crop. Recently the Royal gardener at Dublin, Ireland, ordered fifty of these heaters for the purpose of making tests with them in saving potatoes.—Mr. Louis Meyer, Grand Junction, Colorado, U.S.A.



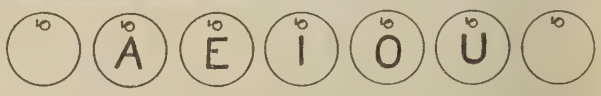
CURIOUS MATCHES IN USE TO-DAY.

THESE matches, which I purchased recently from an Arab dealer, south of Hebron, in Palestine, are of the type now used by the desert wanderers in the Near East. The matches themselves (see top illustration) are made of a kind of touch or slow-burning paper, are in long strips, and perforated like stamps, each perforated piece containing a little heap of explosive compound at one end. When a light is wanted one of the strips is torn off and the explosive mixture rubbed on the box. The strip then smoulders, but it can, if desired, be-blown into a flame. One side of the box has a crude Punch-like figure pictured upon it in gaudy colours—yellow and red—while the other side has upon it Arabic and Greek inscriptions, which I am told are the names of the maker, who lives in Damascus, and instructions for use. The matches are, I believe, similar to those which were in use in England in 1820, the year when matches really became the serious rival to tinder-boxes.—Mr. Percy R. Salmon, 115, Minard Road, Catford, S.E.

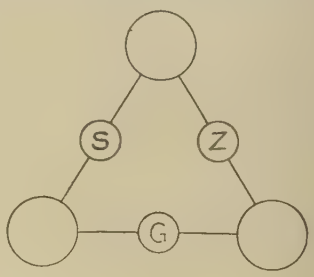
PUZZLES AND SOLUTIONS.

HERE are two more puzzles which may serve to while away a few idle moments. The solutions will be given next month.

1. Two of the discs shown below are turned so that the letters they bear are not visible. By arranging those two letters correctly with the five vowels we may form a well-known English word, the shortest one that contains all the vowels. What are the concealed letters?



2. In the vacant circles place one letter three times so that a correct English word can be read in regular rotation around the triangle.—Mr. Harold M. Haskell, 67, Appleton Street, Manchester, New Hampshire, U.S.A.



A BRIDGE PROBLEM.

Hearts are trumps. A has the lead.

Hearts—Ace, knave.
Diamonds—Queen, 7, 6, 5, 2.
Clubs—Ace.
Spades—Ace, king.

Hearts—Queen, 8, 7, 3.
Diamonds—8.
Clubs—King, 7, 3.
Spades—Queen, 8.

A
Z Y
B

Hearts—4.
Diamonds—King, knave, 12.
Clubs—6, 4, 2.
Spades—10, 4, 3.

Hearts—King, 9, 6, 5.
Diamonds—Ace, 9, 4.
Clubs—Queen, 8, 5.
Spades—None.

A and B are to make 9 tricks out of 10 against any possible defence.—Wladimir de Rozing, Vernon, 189, Anerley Road, Anerley, S.E.

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES.

"The Bulrush in the Pool." Answer: Six feet.

Clock Puzzle. Answer: Thirty-six and twelve-thirteenth minutes past four.

"The Further East, the Nearer West." Answer: 8.35 p.m.

"Bull Run." Answer: The minimum distance between their nose-rings was three feet four inches, but they could stand side by side by each facing his own tree.

Book Puzzle (in "Curiosities" pages). Answer: Each volume contains 256 pages.

"HE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE POINTED OUT THE BEAUTIES OF THE NEW JERUSALEM TO A COUPLE OF GUINEA-PIGS."

(*See page* 365.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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OCTOBER, 1911.

The Joyous Adventures of Aristide Pujol.

By WILLIAM J. LOCKE.

Illustrated by Alec Ball.

VI.—The Adventure of the Miracle.

ARISTIDE, by attaching himself to the Hôtel du Soleil et de l'Ecosse as a kind of glorified courier, had founded the Agence Pujol. As he, personally, was the Agence and the Agence was he, it happened that when he was not in attendance at the hotel, the Agence faded into space, and when he made his appearance in the vestibule and hung up his placard by the bureau, the Agence at once burst again into the splendour of existence. Apparently this fitful career of the Agence Pujol lasted some years. Whenever a chance of more remunerative employment turned up, Aristide took it and dissolved the Agence. Whenever outrageous Fortune chivvied him with slings and arrows penniless to Paris, there was always the Agence waiting to be resuscitated.

It was during one of these periodic flourishings of the Agence Pujol that Aristide met the Ducksmiths.

Business was slack, few guests were at the hotel, and of those few none desired to be personally conducted to the Louvre or Notre Dame or the Statue of Liberty in the Place de la Bastile. They mostly wore the placid expression of folks engaged in business affairs instead of the worried look of pleasure-seekers.

"My good Bocardon," said Aristide, lounging by the bureau and addressing his friend the manager, "this is becoming desperate. In another minute I shall take you out by main force and show you the Tomb of Napoleon."

At that moment the door of the stuffy salon opened, and a travelling Briton, whom Aristide had not seen before, advanced to the bureau and inquired his way to the Madeleine. Aristide turned on him like a flash.

"Sir," said he, extracting documents from his pockets with lightning rapidity, "nothing would give me greater pleasure than to conduct you thither. My card. My tariff,

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My advertisement," pointing to the placard. "I am the managing director of the Agence Pujol, under the special patronage of this hotel. I undertake all travelling arrangements, from the Moulin Rouge to the Pyramids, and, as you see, my charges are moderate."

The Briton, holding the documents in a pudgy hand, looked at the swift-gestured director with portentous solemnity. Then, with equal solemnity, he looked at Bocardon.

"Monsieur Ducksmith," said the latter, "you can repose every confidence in Monsieur Aristide Pujol."

"Umph!" said Mr. Ducksmith.

After another solemn inspection of Aristide, he stuck a pair of gold-rimmed glasses on his fleshy nose and perused the documents. He was a fat, heavy man of about fifty years of age, and his scanty hair was turning grey. His puffy cheeks hung jowl-wise, giving him the appearance of some odd dog—a similarity greatly intensified by the eye-sockets, the lower lids of which were dragged down in the middle, showing the red like a bloodhound's; but here the similarity ended, for the man's eyes, dull and blue, had the unspeculative fixity of a rabbit's. His mouth, small and weak, dribbled away at the corners into the jowls which, in their turn, melted into two or three chins. He was decently dressed in grey tweeds, and wore a diamond ring on his little finger.

"Umph!" said he, at last; and went back to the salon.

As soon as the door closed behind him Aristide sprang into an attitude of indignation.

"Did you ever see such a bear! If I ever saw a bigger one I would eat him without salt or pepper. *Mais nom d'un chien*, such people ought to be made into sausages!"

"*Flègme britannique!*" laughed Bocardon.

Half an hour passed, and Mr. Ducksmith made no reappearance from the salon. In the forlorn hope of a client Aristide went in after him. He found Mr. Ducksmith, glasses on nose, reading a newspaper, and a plump, black-haired lady, with an expressionless face, knitting a grey woollen sock. Why they should be spending their first morning—and a crisp, sunny morning, too—in Paris in the murky staleness of this awful little salon, Aristide could not imagine. As he entered Mr. Ducksmith regarded him vacantly over the top of his gold-rimmed glasses.

"I have looked in," said Aristide, with his ingratiating smile, "to see whether you are ready to go to the Madeleine."

"Madeleine?" the lady inquired, softly, pausing in her knitting.

"Madame." Aristide came forward, and, hand on heart, made her the lowest of bows. "Madame, have I the honour of speaking to Madame Ducksmith? Enchanted, madame, to make your acquaintance," he continued, after a grunt from Mr. Ducksmith had assured him of the correctness of his conjecture. "I am Monsieur Aristide Pujol, director of the Agence Pujol, and my poor services are absolutely at your disposal."

He drew himself up, twisted his moustache, and met her eyes—they were rather sad and tired—with the roguish mockery of his own. She turned to her husband.

"Are you thinking of going to the Madeleine, Bartholomew?"

"I am, Henrietta," said he. "I have decided to do it. And I have also decided to put ourselves in the charge of this gentleman. Mrs. Ducksmith and I are accustomed to all the conveniences of travel—I may say that we are great travellers—and I leave it to you to make the necessary arrangements. I prefer to travel at so much per head per day."

He spoke in a wheezy, solemn monotone, from which all elements of life and joy seemed to have been eliminated. His wife's voice, though softer in timbre, was likewise devoid of colour.

"My husband finds that it saves us from responsibilities," she remarked.

"And over-charges, and the necessity of learning foreign languages, which at our time of life would be difficult. During all our travels we have not been to Paris before, owing to the impossibility of finding a personally-conducted tour of an adequate class."

"Then, my dear sir," cried Aristide, "it is Providence itself that has put you in the way of the Agence Pujol. I will now conduct you to the Madeleine without the least discomfort or danger."

"Put on your hat, Henrietta," said Mr. Ducksmith, "while this gentleman and I discuss terms."

Mrs. Ducksmith gathered up her knitting and retired, Aristide dashing to the door to open it for her. This gallantry surprised her ever so little, for a faint flush came into her cheek and the shadow of a smile into her eyes.

"I wish you to understand, Mr. Pujol," said Mr. Ducksmith, "that being, I may say, a comparatively rich man, I can afford to pay for certain luxuries; but I made a resolution many years ago, which stood me in good stead during my business life, that I would never

be cheated. You will find me liberal but just."

He was as good as his word. Aristide, who had never in his life exploited another's wealth to his own advantage, suggested certain terms, on the basis of so much per head per day, which Mr. Ducksmith declared, with a sigh of relief, to be perfectly satisfactory.

"Perhaps," said he, after further conversation, "you will be good enough to schedule out a month's railway tour through France, and give me an inclusive estimate for the three of us. As I say, Mrs. Ducksmith and I are great travellers—we have been to Norway, to Egypt, to Morocco and the Canaries, to the Holy Land, to Rome, and lovely Lucerne—but we find that attention to the trivial detail of travel militates against our enjoyment."

"My dear sir," said Aristide, "trust in me, and your path and that of the charming Mrs. Ducksmith will be strewn with roses."

Whereupon Mrs. Ducksmith appeared, arrayed for walking out, and Aristide, having ordered a cab, drove with them to the Madeleine. They alighted in front of the majestic flight of steps. Mr. Ducksmith stared at the classical portico supported on its Corinthian columns with his rabbit-like, unspeculative gaze—he had those filmy blue eyes that never seem to wink—and after a moment or two turned away.

"Umph!" said he.

Mrs. Ducksmith, dutiful and silent, turned away also.

"This sacred edifice," Aristide began, in his best cicerone manner, "was built, after a classic model, by the great Napoleon, as a Temple of Fame. It was afterwards used as a church. You will observe—and if you care to you can count, as a conscientious American lady did last week—the fifty-six Corinthian columns. You will see they are Corinthian by the acanthus leaves on the capitals. For the vulgar, who have no architectural knowledge, I have *memoria technica* for the instant recognition of the three orders—Cabbages, Corinthian; horns, Ionic ('orns, Iornic—you see?); anything else, Doric. We will now mount the steps and inspect the interior."

He was dashing off in his eager fashion, when Mr. Ducksmith laid a detaining hand on his arm.

"No," said he, solemnly. "I disapprove of Popish interiors. Take us to the next place."

He entered the waiting victoria. His wife meekly followed.

"I suppose the Louvre is the next place?" said Aristide.

"I leave it to you," said Mr. Ducksmith.

Aristide gave the order to the cabman and took the little seat in the cab facing his employers. On the way down the Rue Royale and the Rue de Rivoli he pointed out the various buildings of interest—Maxim's, the Cercle Royal, the Ministère de la Marine, the Hôtel Continental. Two expressionless faces, two pairs of unresponsive eyes, met his merry glance. He might as well have pointed out the beauties of the New Jerusalem to a couple of guinea-pigs.

The cab stopped at the entrance to the galleries of the Louvre. They entered and walked up the great staircase on the turn of which the Winged Victory stands, with the wind of God in her vesture, proclaiming to each beholder the deathless, ever-soaring, ever-conquering spirit of man, and heralding the immortal glories of the souls, wind-swept likewise by the wind of God, that are enshrined in the treasure-houses beyond.

"There!" said Aristide.

"Umph! No head," said Mr. Ducksmith, passing it by with scarcely a glance.

"Would it cost very much to get a new one?" asked Mrs. Ducksmith, timidly. She was three or four paces behind her spouse.

"It would cost the blood and tears and laughter of the human race," said Aristide.

("That was devilish good, wasn't it?" remarked Aristide, when telling me this story. He always took care not to hide his light under the least possibility of a bushel.)

The Ducksmiths looked at him in their lack-lustre way, and allowed themselves to be guided into the picture-galleries, vaguely hearing Aristide's comments, scarcely glancing at the pictures, and manifesting no sign of interest in anything whatever. From the Louvre they drove to Notre Dame, where the same thing happened. The venerable pile, standing imperishable amid the vicissitudes of centuries (the phrase was Aristide's and he was very proud of it), stirred in their bosoms no perceptible emotion. Mr. Ducksmith grunted and declined to enter; Mrs. Ducksmith said nothing.

As with pictures and cathedrals, so it was with their food at lunch. Beyond a solemn statement to the effect that in their quality of practised travellers they made a point of eating the food and drinking the wine of the country, Mr. Ducksmith did not allude to the meal. At any rate, thought Aristide, they don't clamour for underdone chops and tea. So far they were human. Nor did they maintain an awful silence during the repast. On the contrary, Mr. Ducksmith loved to talk—

in a dismal, pompous way—chiefly of British politics. His method of discourse was to place himself in the position of those in authority and to declare what he would do in any given circumstances. Now, unless the interlocutor adopts the same method and declares what *he* would do, conversation is apt to become one-sided. Aristide, having no notion of a policy should he find himself exercising the functions of the Chancellor of the British Exchequer, cheerfully tried to change the ground of debate.

"What would you do, Mr. Ducksmith, if you were King of England?"

"I should try to rule the realm like a Christian statesman," replied Mr. Ducksmith.

"I should have a devil of a time!" said Aristide.

"I beg your pardon?" said Mr. Ducksmith.

"I should have a—ah, I see—*pardon*. I should——" He looked from one paralyzing face to the other, and threw out his arms. "*Parbleu!*" said he, "I should decapitate your Mrs. Grundy, and make it compulsory for bishops to dance once a week in Trafalgar Square. *Tiens!* I would have it a capital offence for any English cook to prepare hashed mutton without a licence, and I would banish all the bakers of the kingdom to Siberia—ah! your English bread, which you have to eat stale so as to avoid a horrible death!—and I would open two hundred thousand *cafes—mon Dieu!* how thirsty I have been there!—and I would make every English work-girl do her hair properly, and I would ordain that everybody should laugh three times a day, under pain of imprisonment for life."

"I am afraid, Mr. Pujol," remarked Mr. Ducksmith, seriously, "you would not be acting as a constitutional monarch. There is such a thing as the British Constitution, which foreigners are bound to admire, even though they may not understand."

"To be a king must be a great responsibility," said Mrs. Ducksmith.

"Madame," said Aristide, "you have uttered a profound truth." And to himself he murmured, though he should not have done so, "*Nom de Dieu! Nom de Dieu de nom de Dieu!*"

After lunch they drove to Versailles, which they inspected in the same apathetic fashion; then they returned to the hotel, where they established themselves for the rest of the day in the airless salon, Mr. Ducksmith reading English newspapers and his wife knitting a grey woollen sock.

"*Mon vieux!*" said Aristide to Bocardon, "they are people of a nightmare. They are automata endowed with the faculty of digestion. *Ce sont des gens invraisemblables.*"

Paris providing them, apparently, with no entertainment, they started, after a couple of days, *Aristide duce et auspice Pujol*, on their railway tour through France, to Aristide an Odyssey of unimagined depression. They began with Chartres, continued with the Châteaux of the Loire, and began to work their way south. Nothing that Aristide could do roused them from their apathy. They were exasperatingly docile, made few complaints, got up, entrained, detrained, fed, excursionized, slept, just as they were bidden. But they looked at nothing, enjoyed nothing (save perhaps English newspapers and knitting), and uttered nothing by way of criticism or appreciation when Aristide attempted to review the wonders through which they had passed. They did not care to know the history, authentic or Pujolic, of any place they visited; they were impressed by no scene of grandeur, no corner of exquisite beauty. To go on and on, in a dull, non-sentient way, so long as they were spared all forethought, all trouble, all afterthought, seemed to be their ideal of travel. Sometimes Aristide, after a fruitless effort to capture their interest, would hold his head, wondering whether he or the Ducksmith couple were insane. It was a dragon-fly personally conducting two moles through a rose-garden.

Once only, during the early part of their journey, did a gleam of joyousness pierce the dull glaze of Mr. Ducksmith's eyes. He had procured from the bookstall of a station a pile of English newspapers, and was reading them in the train, while his wife knitted the interminable sock. Suddenly he folded a *Daily Telegraph*, and handed it over to Aristide so that he should see nothing but a half-page advertisement. The great capitals leaped to Aristide's eyes:—

"DUCKSMITH'S DELICATE JAMS."

"I am the Ducksmith," said he. "I started and built up the business. When I found that I could retire, I turned it into a limited liability company, and now I am free and rich and able to enjoy the advantages of foreign travel."

Mrs. Ducksmith started, sighed, and dropped a stitch.

"Did you also make pickles?" asked Aristide.

"I did manufacture pickles, but I made my name in jam. In the trade you will find it an honoured one."

"It is that in every nursery in Europe," Aristide declared, with polite hyperbole.

"I have done my best to deserve my reputation," said Mr. Ducksmith, as impervious to flattery as to impressions of beauty.

"*Pecaïre!*" said Aristide to himself, "how can I galvanize these corpses?"

As the soulless days went by this problem grew to be Aristide's main solicitude. He felt strangled, choked, borne down by an intolerable weight. What could he do to stir their vitality? Should he fire off pistols behind them, just to see them jump? But would they jump? Would not Mr. Ducksmith merely turn his rabbit-eyes, set in their bloodhound sockets, vacantly on him, and assume that the detonations were part of the tour's programme? Could he not fill him up with conflicting alcohols, and see what inebriety would do for him? But Mr. Ducksmith declined insidious potations. He drank only at meal-time, and sparingly. Aristide prayed that some Thais might come along, cast her spell upon him, and induce him to wink. He himself was powerless. His raciest stories fell on dull ears; none of his jokes called forth a smile. At last, having taken them to nearly all the historic châteaux of Touraine, without eliciting one cry of admiration, he gave Mr. Ducksmith up in despair and devoted his attention to the lady.

Mrs. Ducksmith parted her smooth black hair in the middle and fastened it in a knob at the back of her head. Her clothes were good and new, but some desolate dressmaker had contrived to invest them with an air of hopeless dowdiness. At her bosom she wore a great brooch, containing intertwined locks of a grandfather and grandmother long since defunct. Her mind was as drearily equipped as her person. She had a vague idea that they were travelling in France; but if Aristide had told her that it was Japan she would have meekly accepted the information. She had no opinions. Still she was a woman, and Aristide, firm in his conviction that when it comes to love-making all women are the same, proceeded forthwith to make love to her.

"HIS AUDACIOUS HAND PLACED A DEEP CRIMSON ROSE AGAINST HER CORSAGE."

"Madame," said he, one morning—she was knitting in the vestibule of the Hôtel du Faisan at Tours, Mr. Ducksmith being engaged, as usual, in the salon with his newspapers—"how much more charming that beautiful grey dress would be if it had a spot of colour."

His audacious hand placed a deep crimson rose against her corsage, and he stood away at arm's length, his head on one side, judging the effect.

"Magnificent! If madame would only do me the honour to wear it."

Mrs. Ducksmith took the flower hesitatingly.

"I'm afraid my husband does not like colour," she said.

"He must be taught," cried Aristide. "You must teach him. I must teach him. Let us begin at once. Here is a pin."

He held the pin delicately between finger and thumb, and controlled her with his roguish eyes. She took the pin and fixed the rose to her dress.

"I don't know what Mr. Ducksmith will say."

"What he ought to say, madame, is 'Bountiful Providence, I thank Thee for giving me such a beautiful wife.'"

Mrs. Ducksmith blushed and, to conceal her face, bent it over her resumed knitting. She made woman's time-honoured response.

"I don't think you ought to say such things, Mr. Pujol."

"Ah, madame," said he, lowering his voice; "I have tried not to; but, *que voulez-vous*, it was stronger than I. When I see you going about like a little grey mouse"—the lady weighed at least twelve stone—"you, who ought to be ravishing the eyes of mankind, I feel indignation here"—he thumped his chest; "my Provençal heart is stirred. It is enough to make one weep."

"I don't quite understand you, Mr. Pujol," she said, dropping stitches recklessly.

"Ah, madame," he whispered—and the rascal's whisper on such occasions could be very seductive—"that I will never believe."

"I am too old to dress myself up in fine clothes," she murmured.

"That's an illusion," said he, with a wide-flung gesture, "that will vanish at the first experiment."

Mr. Ducksmith emerged from the salon, *Daily Telegraph* in hand. Mrs. Ducksmith shot a timid glance at him and the knitting-needles clicked together nervously. But the vacant eyes of the heavy man seemed no more to note the rose on her bosom than they noted any point of beauty in landscape or building.

Aristide went away chuckling, highly diverted by the success of his first effort. He had touched some hidden springs of feeling. Whatever might happen, at any rate, for the remainder of the tour he would not have to spend his emotional force in vain attempts to knock sparks out of a jelly-fish. He noticed with delight that at dinner that evening Mrs. Ducksmith, still wearing the rose, had modified the rigid sweep of her hair from the mid-parting. It gave just a wavy hint of coquetry. He made her a little bow and whispered, "Charming!" Whereupon she coloured and dropped her eyes. And during the meal, while Mr. Ducksmith discoursed on bounty-fed sugar, his wife and Aristide exchanged, across the table, the glances of conspirators. After dinner he approached her.

"Madame, may I have the privilege of showing you the moon of Touraine?"

She laid down her knitting. "Bartholomew, will you come out?"

He looked at her over his glasses and shook his head.

"What is the good of looking at moonshine? The moon itself I have already seen."

So Aristide and Mrs. Ducksmith sat by themselves outside the hotel, and he expounded to her the beauty of moonlight and its intoxicating effect on folks in love.

"Wouldn't you like," said he, "to be lying on that white burnished cloud with your beloved kissing your feet?"

"What odd things you think of."

"But wouldn't you?" he insinuated.

Her bosom heaved and swelled on a sigh. She watched the strip of silver for a while and then murmured a wistful "Yes."

"I can tell you of many odd things," said Aristide. "I can tell you how flowers sing and what colour there is in the notes of birds. And how a cornfield laughs, and how the face of a woman who loves can outdazzle the sun. *Chère Madame*," he went on, after a pause, touching her little plump hand, "you have been hungering for beauty and thirsting for sympathy all your life. Isn't that so?"

She nodded.

"You have always been misunderstood."

A tear fell. Our rascal saw the glistening drop with peculiar satisfaction. Poor Mrs. Ducksmith! It was a child's game. *Enfin*, what woman could resist him? He had, however, one transitory qualm of conscience, for, with all his vagaries, Aristide was a kindly and honest man. Was it right to disturb those placid depths? Was it right to fill this woman with romantic aspirations that could never be gratified? He himself had not the slightest intention of playing Lothario and of wrecking the peace of the Ducksmith household. The realization of the saint-like purity of his aims reassured him. When he wanted to make love to a woman, *pour tout de bon* it would not be to Mrs. Ducksmith.

"Bah!" said he to himself. "I am doing a noble and disinterested act. I am restoring sight to the blind. I am giving life to one in

a state of suspended animation. *Tron de l'Air!* I am playing the part of a soul-reviver! And, *parbleu!* it isn't Jean or Jacques that can do that. It takes an Aristide Pujol!"

So, having persuaded himself, in his Southern way, that he was executing an almost divine mission, he continued, with a zest now sharpened by an approving conscience, to revive Mrs. Ducksmith's soul.

The poor lady, who had suffered the blighting influence of Mr. Ducksmith for twenty years with never a ray of counteracting warmth from the outside, expanded like a flower to the sun under the soul-reviving process. Day by day she exhibited some fresh timid coquetry in dress and manner. Gradually she began to respond to Aristide's suggestions of beauty in natural scenery and exquisite building. On the ramparts of Angoulême, daintiest of towns in France, she gazed at the smiling valleys of the Charente and the Son stretching away below, and of her own accord touched his arm lightly and said: "How beautiful!" She appealed to her husband.

"Umph!" said he.

Once more (it had become a habit) she exchanged glances with Aristide. He drew her a little farther along, under pretext of pointing out the dreamy sweep of the Charente.

"If he appreciates nothing at all, why on earth does he travel?"

Her eyelids fluttered upwards for a fraction of a second.

"It's his mania," she said. "He can never rest at home. He must always be going on—on."

"How can you endure it?" he asked.

She sighed. "It is better now that you can teach me how to look at things."

"Good!" thought Aristide. "When I leave them she can teach him to look at things and revive his soul. Truly I deserve a halo."

As Mr. Ducksmith appeared to be entirely unperceptive of his wife's spiritual expansion, Aristide grew bolder in his apostolate. He complimented Mrs. Ducksmith to his face. He presented her daily with flowers. He scarcely waited for the heavy man's back to be turned to make love to her. If she did not believe that she was the most beautiful, the most ravishing, the most delicate-souled woman in the world, it was through no fault of Aristide. Mr. Ducksmith went his pompous, unseeing way. At every stopping-place stacks of English daily papers awaited him. Sometimes, while Aristide was showing them the sights of a town—to which, by the way, he insisted on being conducted—he would extract a newspaper from his pocket and read with dull and dogged stupidity. Once Aristide caught him reading the advertisements for cooks and housemaids. In these circumstances Mrs. Ducksmith spiritually expanded at an alarming rate; and in an inverse ratio dwindled the progress of Mr. Ducksmith's sock.

They arrived at Perigueux, in Perigord, land of truffles, one morning, in time for lunch. Towards the end of the meal the *maître d'hôtel* helped them to great slabs of *pâté de foie gras*, made in the house—most of the hotel-keepers in Perigord make *pâté de foie gras*, both for home consumption and for exportation—and waited expectant of their appreciation. He was not disappointed. Mr. Ducksmith, after a hesitating glance at the first mouthful, swallowed it, greedily devoured his slab, and, after pointing to his empty plate, said, solemnly:—

"*Plou.*"

Like Oliver, he asked for more.

"*Tiens!*" thought Aristide, astounded. "Is he, too, developing a soul?"

But, alas! there were no signs of it when they went their dreary round of the town in the usual ramshackle open cab. The cathedral of Saint-Front, extolled by Aristide and restored by Abadie—a terrible fellow who has capped with tops of pepper-castors every pre-Gothic building in France—gave him no thrill; nor did the picturesque, tumble-down ancient buildings on the banks of the Dordogne, nor the delicate Renaissance façades in the cool, narrow Rue du Lys.

"We will now go back to the hotel," said Mr. Ducksmith.

"But have we seen it all?" asked his wife.

"By no means," said Aristide.

"We will go back to the hotel," repeated her husband, in his expressionless tones. "I have seen enough of Perigueux."

This was final. They drove back to the hotel. Mr. Ducksmith, without a word, went straight into the salon, leaving Aristide and his wife standing in the vestibule.

"And you, madame," said Aristide; "are you going to sacrifice the glory of God's sunshine to the manufacture of woollen socks?"

She smiled—she had caught the trick at last—and said, in happy submission: "What would you have me do?"

With one hand he clasped her arm; with the other, in a superb gesture, he indicated the sunlit world outside.

"Let us drain together," cried he, "the loveliness of Perigueux to its dregs!"

Greatly daring, she followed him. It was a rapturous escapade—the first adventure of her life. She turned her comely face to him and he saw smiles round her lips and laughter in her eyes. Aristide, worker of miracles, strutted by her side choke-full of vanity. They wandered through the picturesque streets of the old town with the gaiety of truant children, peeping through iron gateways into old courtyards, venturing their heads into the murk of black stairways, talking (on the part of Aristide) with mothers nursing chuckling babes on their doorsteps, crossing the thresholds, hitherto taboo, of churches, and meeting the mystery of coloured glass and shadows and the heavy smell of incense.

Her hand was on his arm when they entered the flagged courtyard of an ancient palace, a stately medley of the centuries, with wrought ironwork in the balconies, tourelles, oriels, exquisite Renaissance ornaments on architraves, and a great central Gothic doorway, with great window-openings above, through which was visible the stone staircase of honour leading to the upper floors. In a corner stood a mediæval well, the sides curiously carved. One side of the courtyard blazed in sunshine, the other lay cool and grey in shadow. Not a human form or voice troubled the serenity of the spot. On a stone bench against the shady wall Aristide and Mrs. Ducksmith sat down to rest.

"*Voilà!*" said Aristide. "Here one can suck in all the past like an omelette. They had the feeling for beauty, those old fellows."

"I have wasted twenty years of my life," said Mrs. Ducksmith, with a sigh. "Why didn't I meet someone like you when I was young? Ah, you don't know what my life has been, Mr. Pujol."

"Why not Aristide when we are alone? Why not, Henriette?".

He too had the sense of adventure, and his eyes were more than usually compelling and his voice most seductive. For some reason or other, undivined by Aristide—over-excitement of nerves, perhaps—she burst into tears.

"*Henriette! Henriette, ne pleurez pas.*"

His arm crept round her—he knew not how; her head sank on his shoulder, she knew not why—faithlessness to her lord was as far from her thoughts as murder or arson; but for one poor little moment in a lifetime it is good to weep on someone's shoulder and to have someone's sympathetic arm around one's waist.

"*Pauvre petite femme!* And is it love she is pining for?"

She sobbed; he lifted her chin with his free hand—and what less could moral apostle do?—he kissed her on her wet cheek.

A bellow like that of an angry bull caused them to start asunder. They looked up, and there was Mr. Ducksmith within a few yards of them, his face aflame, his rabbit's-eyes on fire with rage. He advanced, shook his fists in their faces.

"I've caught you! At last, after twenty years, I've caught you!"

"Monsieur," cried Aristide, starting up, "allow me to explain."

He swept Aristide aside like an intercepting willow-branch, and poured forth a torrent of furious speech upon his wife.

"I have hated you for twenty years. Day by day I have hated you more. I've watched you, watched you, watched you! But, you sly jade, you've been too clever for me till now. Yes; I followed you from the hotel. I dogged you. I foresaw what would happen. Now the end has come. I've hated you for twenty years—ever since you first betrayed me——"

Mrs. Ducksmith, who had sat with overwhelmed head in her hands, started bolt upright, and looked at him like one thunderstruck.

"I betrayed you?" she gasped, in bewilderment. "My God! When? How? What do you mean?"

He laughed—for the first time since Aristide had known him—but it was a ghastly laugh, that made the jowls of his cheeks spread horribly to his ears; and again he flooded the calm, stately courtyard with the raging violence of words. The veneer of easy life fell from him. He became the low-born, petty tradesman, using the language of the hands of his jam factory. No, he had never told her. He had awaited his chance. Now he had found it. He called her names. . . . . .

Aristide interposed, his Southern being athrob with the insults heaped upon the woman.

"Say that again, monsieur," he shouted, "and I will take you up in my arms like a sheep and throw you down that well."

The two men glared at one another, Aristide standing bent, with crooked fingers, ready to spring at the other's throat. The woman threw herself between them.

"For Heaven's sake," she cried, "listen to me! I have done no wrong. I have done no wrong now—I never did you wrong, so help me God!"

Mr. Ducksmith laughed again, and his

laugh re-echoed round the quiet walls and up the vast staircase of honour.

"You'd be a fool not to say it. But now I've done with you. Here, you, sir. Take her away—do what you like with her; I'll divorce her. I'll give you a thousand pounds never to see her again."

"*Goujat! Triple goujat!*" cried Aristide, more incensed than ever at this final insult.

Mrs. Ducksmith, deadly white, swayed sideways, and Aristide caught her in his arms and dragged her to the stone bench. The fat, heavy man looked at them for a second, laughed again, and sped through the *porte-cochère*. Mrs. Ducksmith quickly recovered from her fainting attack, and gently pushed the solicitous Aristide away.

"Merciful Heaven!" she murmured. "What is to become of me?"

The last person to answer the question was Aristide. For the first time in his adventurous life resource failed him. He stared at the woman for whom he cared not the snap of a finger, and who, he knew, cared not the snap of a finger for him, aghast at the havoc he had wrought. If he had set out to arouse emotion in these two sluggish breasts he had done so with a vengeance. He had thought he was amusing himself with a toy cannon, and he had fired a charge of dynamite.

He questioned her almost stupidly—for a man in the comic mask does not readily attune himself to tragedy. She answered with the desolate frankness of a lost soul. And then the whole meaning—or the lack of meaning—of their inanimate lives was revealed to him. Absolute estrangement had followed the birth of their child nearly twenty years ago. The child had died after a few weeks. Since then he saw—and the generous blood of his heart froze as the vision came to him—that the vulgar, half-sentient, rabbit-eyed bloodhound of a man had nursed an unexpressed, dull, undying, implacable resentment against the woman. It did not matter that the man's suspicion was vain. To Aristide the woman's blank amazement at the preposterous charge was proof enough; to the man the thing was real. For nearly twenty years the man had suffered the cancer to eat away his vitals, and he had watched and watched his blame-

"I'VE CAUGHT YOU! AT LAST, AFTER TWENTY YEARS, I'VE CAUGHT YOU!"

less wife, until now, at last, he had caught her in this folly. No wonder he could not rest at home; no wonder he was driven, Io-wise, on and on, although he hated travel and all its discomforts, knew no word of a foreign language, knew no scrap of history, had no sense of beauty, was utterly ignorant, as every single one of our expensively State-educated English lower classes is, of everything that matters on God's earth; no wonder that, in the unfamiliarity of foreign lands, feeling as helpless as a ballet-dancer in a cavalry charge, he looked to Cook, or Lunn, or the Agence Pujol to carry him through his uninspired pilgrimage. For twenty years he had shown no sign of joy or sorrow or anger, scarcely even of pleasure or annoyance. A tortoise could not have been more unemotional. The unsuspected volcano had slumbered. To-day came disastrous eruption. And what was a mere laughing, crying child of a man like Aristide Pujol in front of a Ducksmith volcano?

"What is to become of me?" wailed Mrs. Ducksmith again.

"*Ma foi!*" said Aristide, with a shrug of his shoulders. "What's going to become of anyone? Who can foretell what will happen in a minute's time? *Tiens!*" he added, kindly laying his hand on the sobbing woman's shoulder. "Be comforted, my poor Henriette. Just as nothing in this world is as good as we hope, so nothing is as bad as we fear. *Voyons!* All is not lost yet. We must return to the hotel."

She weepingly acquiesced. They walked through the quiet streets like children whose truancy had been discovered and who were creeping back to condign punishment at school. When they reached the hotel, Mrs. Ducksmith went straight up to the woman's haven, her bedroom.

Aristide tugged at his Vandyke beard in dire perplexity. The situation was too pregnant with tragedy for him to run away and leave the pair to deal with it as best they could. But what was he to do? He sat down in the vestibule and tried to think. The landlord, an unstoppable gramophone of garrulity, entering by the street-door and bearing down upon him, put him to flight. He, too, sought his bedroom, a cool apartment with a balcony outside the French window. On this balcony, which stretched along the whole range of first-floor bedrooms, he stood for a while, pondering deeply. Then, in an absent way, he overstepped the limit of his own room-frontage. A queer sound startled him. He paused, glanced through the open window, and there he saw a sight which for the moment paralyzed him.

"THERE HE SAW A SIGHT WHICH FOR THE MOMENT PARALYZED HIM."

Recovering command of his muscles, he tip-toed his way back. He remembered now that the three rooms adjoined. Next to his was Mr. Ducksmith's, and then came Mrs. Ducksmith's. It was Mr. Ducksmith whom he had seen. Suddenly his dark face became luminous with laughter, his eyes glowed, he threw his hat in the air and danced with glee about the room. Having thus worked off the first intoxication of his idea, he flung his few articles of attire and toilet necessaries into his bag, strapped it, and darted, in his dragon-fly way, into the corridor and tapped softly

at Mrs. Ducksmith's door. She opened it—a poor dumpy Niobe, all tears. He put his finger to his lips.

"Madame," he whispered, bringing to bear on her all the mocking magnetism of his eyes, "if you value your happiness you will do exactly what I tell you. You will obey me implicitly. You must not ask questions. Pack your trunks at once. In ten minutes' time the porter will come for them."

She looked at him with a scared face. "But what am I going to do?"

"You are going to revenge yourself on your husband."

"But I don't want to," she replied, piteously.

"I do," said he. "Begin, *chère madame.* Every moment is precious."

In a state of stupefied terror the poor woman obeyed him. He saw her start seriously on her task and then went downstairs, where he held a violent and gesticulatory conversation with the landlord and with a man in a green baize apron summoned from some dim lair of the hotel. After that he lit a cigarette and smoked feverishly, walking up and down the pavement. In ten minutes' time his luggage with that of Mrs. Ducksmith was placed upon the cab. Mrs. Ducksmith appeared trembling and tear-stained in the vestibule.

The man in the green baize apron knocked at Mr. Ducksmith's door and entered the room.

"I have come for the baggage of monsieur," said he.

"Baggage? What baggage?" asked Mr. Ducksmith, sitting up.

"I have descended the baggage of Monsieur Pujol," said the porter in his stumbling English, "and of madame, and put them in a cab, and I naturally thought monsieur was going away too."

"Going away!" He rubbed his eyes, glared at the porter, and dashed into his wife's room. It was empty. He dashed into Aristide's room. It was empty too. With a roar like that of a wounded elephant he rushed downstairs, the man in the green baize apron following at his heels.

Not a soul was in the vestibule. No cab was at the door. Mr. Ducksmith turned upon his stupefied satellite.

"Where are they?"

"They must have gone already. I filled the cab. Perhaps Monsieur Pujol and madame have gone before to make arrangements."

"Where have they gone to?"

"In Perigueux there is nowhere to go to with baggage but the railway station."

A decrepit vehicle with a gaudy linen canopy hove in sight. Mr. Ducksmith hailed it as the last victims of the Flood must have hailed the Ark. He sprang into it and drove to the station.

There, in the *salle d'attente,* he found Aristide mounting guard over his wife's luggage. He hurled his immense bulk at his betrayer.

"You blackguard! Where is my wife?"

"Monsieur," said Aristide, puffing a cigarette, sublimely impudent and debonair, "I decline to answer any questions. Your wife is no longer your wife. You offered me a thousand pounds to take her away. I am taking her away. I did not deign to disturb you for such a trifle as a thousand pounds, but, since you are here——"

He smiled engagingly and held out his curved palm. Mr. Ducksmith foamed at the corners of the small mouth that disappeared into the bloodhound jowls.

"My wife!" he shouted. "If you don't want me to throw you down and trample on you."

A band of loungers, railway officials, peasants, and other travellers awaiting their trains, gathered round. As the altercation was conducted in English, which they did not understand, they could only hope for the commencement of physical hostilities.

"My dear sir," said Aristide, "I do not understand you. For twenty years you hold an innocent and virtuous woman under an infamous suspicion. She meets a sympathetic soul, and you come across her pouring into his ear the love and despair of a lifetime. You have more suspicion. You tell me you will give me a thousand pounds to go away with her. I take you at your word. And now you want to stamp on me. *Ma foi!* it is not reasonable."

Mr. Ducksmith seized him by the lapels of his coat. A gasp of expectation went round the crowd. But Aristide recognized an agonized appeal in the eyes now bloodshot.

"My wife!" he said hoarsely. "I want my wife. I can't live without her. Give her back to me. Where is she?"

"You had better search the station," said Aristide.

The heavy man unconsciously shook him in his powerful grasp, as a child might shake a doll.

"Give her to me! Give her to me, I say! She won't regret it."

"You swear that?" asked Aristide, with lightning quickness.

"MR. DUCKSMITH SEIZED HIM BY THE LAPELS OF HIS COAT."

"I swear it, by God! Where is she?"

Aristide disengaged himself, waved his hand airily towards Perigueux, and smiled blandly.

"In the salon of the hotel, waiting for you to throw yourself on your knees before her."

Mr. Ducksmith gripped him by the arm.

"Come back with me. If you're lying I'll kill you."

"The luggage?" queried Aristide.

"Confound the luggage!" said Mr. Ducksmith, and dragged him out of the station.

A cab brought them quickly to the hotel. Mr. Ducksmith bolted like an obese rabbit into the salon. A few moments afterwards Aristide, entering, found them locked in each other's arms.

They started alone for England that night, and Aristide returned to the directorship of the Agence Pujol. But he took upon himself enormous credit for having worked a miracle.

"One thing I can't understand," said I, after he had told me the story, "is what put this sham elopement in to your crazy head. What did you see when you looked into Mr. Ducksmith's bedroom?"

"Ah, *mon vieux*, I did not tell you. If I had told you, you would not have been surprised at what I did. I saw a sight that would have melted the heart of a stone. I saw Ducksmith wallowing on his bed and sobbing as if his heart would break. It filled my soul with pity. I said: 'If that mountain of insensibility can weep and sob in such agony, it is because he loves—and it is I, Aristide, who have reawakened that love.'"

"Then," said I, "why on earth didn't you go and fetch Mrs. Ducksmith and leave them together?"

He started from his chair and threw up both hands.

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried he. "You English! You are a charming people, but you have no romance. You have no dramatic sense. I will help myself to a whisky and soda."

The "White Swan." The Blacking Factory.

THE BLACKING FACTORY IN HUNGERFORD MARKET IN WHICH DICKENS WORKED AS A BOY.

Some Dickens Discoveries.

By CHARLES VAN NOORDEN.

[The discoveries described in this article are all quite new and of the greatest interest to lovers of Dickens, while the illustrations also are reproduced for the first time.]

THE field of Dickensiana has long since been gleaned by an army of Dickens enthusiasts, but there are still a few corners unexplored and some interesting particulars unrevealed as yet by his biographers. For instance, what incident in Dickens's early career is more touching than his boyish experiences in the blacking factory? Where was this blacking factory? The illustration herewith reproduced is of great interest. It shows the blacking factory in Hungerford Market in which Dickens began life on his own account. A point of additional value is the fact that it depicts the warehouse in 1824—the very year that Dickens worked there. This is the only view, so far as I know, which shows the house in its original condition, it having been later faced with clapboards. It is well described in Chapter xi. of "David Copperfield": "The last house at the bottom of a narrow street, curving down-hill to the river, with some stairs at the end, where people took boat. It was a crazy old house with a wharf of its own, abutting on the water when the tide was in, and on the mud when the tide was out, and literally overrun with rats. Its panelled rooms, discoloured with the dirt and smoke of a hundred years, I dare say; its decaying floors and staircase; the squeaking and scuffling of the old grey rats down in the cellars; and the dirt and rottenness of the place——"

He goes on to say: "When I dined regularly and handsomely, I had a saveloy and a penny loaf, or a fourpenny plate of red beef from a cook's shop; or a plate of bread and cheese and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public-house opposite our place of business, called the Lion, or the Lion and something else that I have forgotten." This public-house was really the White Swan. It

"LITTLE NELL'S TREE" ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH.
From a Photograph by the Author.

is also to be seen in the illustration, and is described in Chapter lvii., when Mr. Micawber and his family are emigrating, in the following words: "A little dirty, tumble-down public-house, which in those days was close to the stairs, and whose protruding wooden rooms overhung the river. The family, as emigrants, being objects of some interest in and about Hungerford, attracted so many beholders, that we were glad to take refuge in their room. It was one of the wooden chambers upstairs, with the tide flowing underneath."

The blacking factory, which must have stood about the lower end of Craven Street, Charing Cross, was pulled down with the rest of the market to make way for the glorified fish market, a rival to Billingsgate, in 1830. This, in its turn, was demolished for the Hungerford Suspension Bridge, which again gave place to the present monstrosity of the Charing Cross railway station.

On a June morning Little Nell and her grandfather set out from the Old Curiosity Shop to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Starting from the neighbourhood of Charing Cross, they progressed toward Tottenham Court Road, passing on their way the busy realms of Oxford Street, then through the poor quarters, until "At length these streets became more straggling yet, dwindled and dwindled away until there were only small garden-patches bordering the road . . . Then came a turnpike; then fields again with trees and haystacks; then a hill, and on the top of that the traveller might stop and, looking back at old St. Paul's looming through the smoke, . . . might feel at last that he was clear of London.

"Near such a spot as this, and in a pleasant field, the old man and his little guide (if guide she were who knew not whither they were bound) sat down to rest. There was a pool of clear water in the field." Now, there is a hill forming part of Hampstead's pleasance which was, at the time of the story, a mere series of fields divided by hedgerows. This is Parliament Hill, and from its summit could such a view of St. Paul's with its surroundings be descried.

The identification of the resting-place was first made by the late Dr. Richard Garnett, and, I think, is fully borne out by the remarkable resemblance between the illustration in

LITTLE NELL AND HER GRANDFATHER RESTING.
From the Engraving in "The Old Curiosity Shop."

the book and the photograph on the previous page, which I took one summer morning, some eleven years ago, when on an exploring expedition with Dr. Garnett. For the guidance of pilgrims—if they will take the gravel path from the East Heath Road to Parliament Hill, and turn along the back of the hedge dividing the hill from the lower Heath—at the fourth pair of boundary stones will be found Little Nell's tree.

There stood, until some months ago in High Holborn, two doors away from Museum Street, and facing the end of Drury Lane, an old building which housed what was probably the original of Mrs. Jarley's Waxworks. It was once upon a time a popular exhibition known as Ferguson's Waxworks, founded by that gentleman in 1832 or 1833. In its extensive rooms and "promenade" were to be seen the characters King George III., Mr. Grimaldi, as clown, Mary Queen of Scots, and that "Unfortunate Maid of Honour in the time of Queen Elizabeth

THE HOUSE WHICH CONTAINED THE ORIGINAL OF JARLEY'S WAXWORKS.

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JARLEY'S WAXWORKS IN DICKENS'S DAY.

who died from pricking her finger in consequence of working upon a Sunday" (Lady Anne Wilson).

All these are enumerated in Mr. Ferguson's Catalogue (1840), which I have in my collection, the other personages mentioned in the "Old Curiosity Shop" having doubtless been changed into other celebrities, in accordance with the amiable custom of waxwork proprietors.

An old gentleman, who was for many years connected with the show, told me that their show-woman, Mrs. Jarvis (not Mrs. Harris) was the very "moral" of Mrs. Jarley, and that she told him that Mr. Dickens was a frequent visitor and often spoke with her. Ferguson's would be on Dickens's road to work either at the *Sun*, or *Mirror of Parliament*, or *Morning Chronicle* newspapers, as the high road then ran down High Holborn, through Broad Street, and High Street, Bloomsbury, to Oxford Street. New Oxford Street was not made until 1849.

Readers of Dickens's life will remember the

THE STABLE-YARD IN DEVONSHIRE TERRACE WHERE GRIP, THE RAVEN, LIVED, AND WHERE IS SEEN THE SMOKY CHIMNEY WHICH GAVE RISE TO AN AMUSING QUARREL.

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story of the stable at Devonshire Terrace. It concerns the smoking of this stable's chimney, about which two of his neighbours had complained, which Dickens's groom, Topping, had so complicated by secret devices of his own, meant to conciliate each complainant alternately, and having the effect of aggravating both, that law proceedings were only barely avoided. Dickens records a report from Topping :—

"Beggin' your pardon, sir, but the genelman next door, sir, seems to be gettin' quite comfortable and pleasant about the chimley." "I don't think he is, Topping." "Yes, he is, sir, I think. He come out in the yard this morning and says '*Coachman*,' he says (observe the vision of a great large fat man called up by the word), '*is that your raven*,' he says, '*coachman? or is it Mr. Dickens's raven?*' he says. 'My master's, sir,' I says. '*Well*,' he says, '*it's a fine bird. I think the chimley'll do now, coachman—now the jint's taken off the pipe*,' he says. 'I hope it will, sir,' I says; 'my master's a genelman as wouldn't annoy no genelman if he could help it I'm sure; and my own missis is so afraid of havin' a bit of fire that o' Sundays our little bit of weal or what not goes to the baker a purpose.' '*Damn the chimley, coachman*,' he says; '*it's a-smoking now.*' 'It a'n't a-smoking your way, sir,' I says. '*Well*,' he says, '*no more it is, coachman, and as long as it smokes anybody else's way, it's all right and I'm agreeable.*'"

The raven referred to was the first model for Grip, in "Barnaby Rudge." He died from an overdose of white lead, the effects of greed, in March, 1841.

I recently discovered a letter addressed by Dickens from 11, Selwood Terrace, Queen's Elm, to his friend Austin, and, as the address is unmentioned by previous writers, I set myself to find the house and the reason why he had lived there. Taking into consideration the fact that the letter was written in *Morning Chronicle* days and that he was married at St. Luke's, Chelsea, I thought he might

THE HOUSE IN SELWOOD TERRACE, KENSINGTON, WHERE DICKENS LODGED IN 1836 IN ORDER TO BE NEAR HIS FUTURE WIFE.

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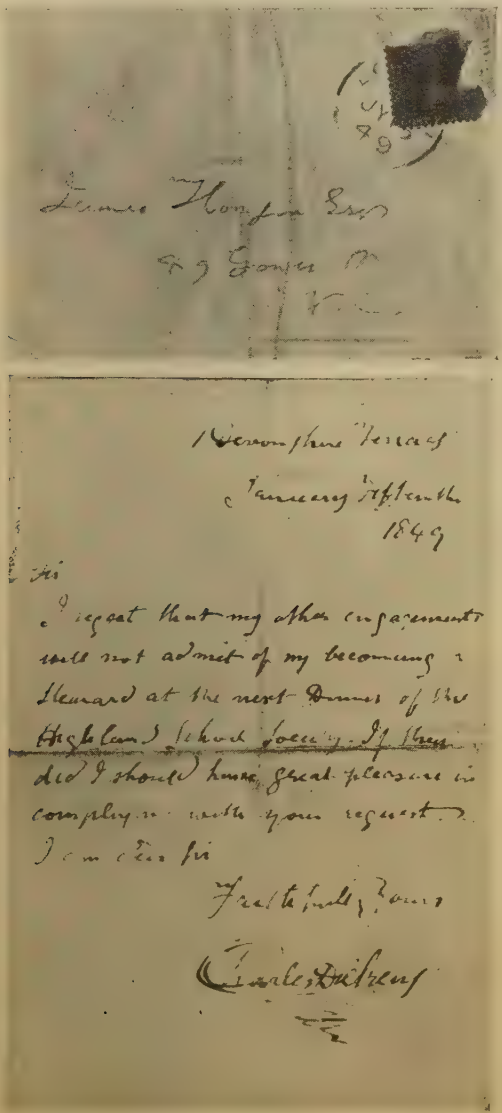
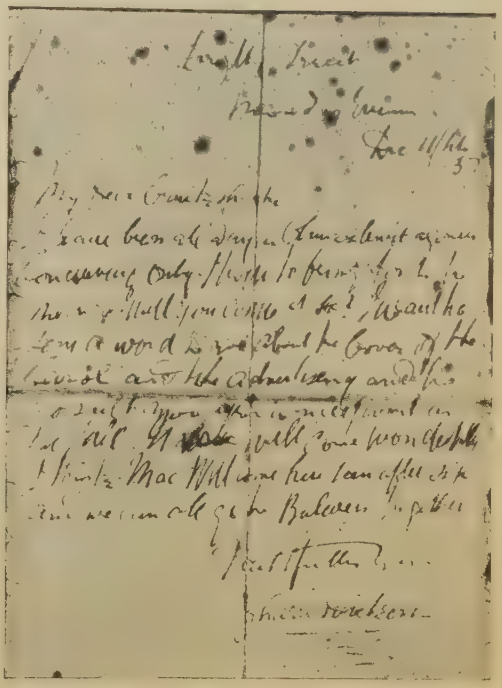
have taken lodging here to give him the necessary legal status for banns; but I found that Selwood Terrace was in Kensington, not Chelsea, so I applied to Miss Georgina Hogarth, Dickens's sister-in-law, who, with the greatest kindness, wrote me a long letter giving full particulars. "Mr. Dickens came to lodge in Selwood Terrace, near the Queen's Elm, in order to be near my sister. We lived at that time at No. 18, York Place, Fulham Road; we were opposite large market gardens with green hedges. They are now covered by the Consumption Hospital."

To the student of Dickens it should be easy to detect discrepancies between letters and



HOW DICKENS FORGERS WORK—A FORGED LETTER AND ENVELOPE WHICH GIVE THEMSELVES AWAY.



ANOTHER FORGED LETTER, WHICH THE DATES PROVE FALSE.

the facts, which requires that forgers of new discovered or unpublished letters should be good Dickensians (although I hope no *good* Dickensian would forge). In the first instance given here the handwriting is a very poor imitation; and, in addition to this, the forger has mistaken the date JY on the postmark to be January, whereas it is July. January in postmarkology is JA.

The second letter is a very queer one, and gives itself away completely to Dickens students, being dated Doughty Street, December 11th, 1837. It speaks first of all of "Chuzzlewit agonies." Now, the first number of "Chuzzlewit" did not appear till 1843, while the "Christmas Carol" did not appear till Christmas of the same year. There are other points in the letter which I need not enumerate. I have a lingering suspicion in my mind that this second letter was written by a well-known illustrator of the time to bolster up his claim to be the originator of Dickens stories.

"I have had the queerest adventure this morning," Dickens wrote (December 28th, 1849), on the eve of his tenth number of "David Copperfield"—"the receipt of the enclosed from Miss Mowcher! It is serio-comic, but there is no doubt one is wrong in being tempted to such a use of power." Thinking a grotesque little oddity among his

acquaintance to be safe from recognition, he had done what Smollett did sometimes, but never Fielding, and given way, in the first outburst of fun that had broken out around the fancy, to the temptation of copying too closely peculiarities of figure and face amounting in effect to deformity. He was shocked at discovering the pain he had given, and a copy is before me of the assurances by way of reply which he at once sent to the complainant, stating that he was grieved and surprised beyond measure; that he had not intended her altogether; that all his characters, being made up out of many people, were composite, and never individual; that the chair (for table) and other matters were undoubtedly from her, but the other traits were not hers at all; that in Miss Mowcher's "Ain't I volatile?" his friends had quite correctly recognized the favourite utterance of a different person; that he felt, nevertheless, he had done wrong, and would now do anything to repair it; that he intended to employ the character in an unpleasant way, but he would, whatever the risk or inconvenience, change it all, so that nothing but an agreeable impression should be left. The reader will remember how this was managed, and that the thirty-second chapter went so far to undo what the twenty-second chapter had done:—

"'Trust me no more, but trust me no less, than you would trust a full-sized woman,' said the little creature, touching me appealingly on the wrist. 'If ever you see me again, unlike what I am now, and like what I was when you first saw me, observe what company I am in. Call to mind that I am a very helpless and defenceless little thing. Think of me at home with my brother like myself and sister like myself, when my day's work is done. Perhaps you won't then be very hard upon me, or surprised if I can be distressed and serious. Good night!'"

It will be remembered how, in Chapter lxi., Miss Mowcher is made the instrument of retribution on the scoundrel Littimer:—

"He cut her face right open, and pounded her in the most brutal manner, when she took him; but she never loosed her hold till he was locked up. She held so tight to him, in fact, that the officers were obliged to take 'em both together. She gave her evidence in the gamest way, and was highly complimented by the Bench and cheered right home to her lodgings. She said in Court that she'd have took him single-handed (on account of what she knew concerning him) if he had been Samson. And it's my belief she would!"

MRS. SEYMOUR HILL, CORN-OPERATOR, THE ORIGINAL OF MISS MOWCHER.
From "The Town," November, 1838.

The mystery of this lady's personality, only noticed in Forster's "Life of Dickens" by a letter, is here unveiled for the first time by a quotation from *The Town* for November, 1838, in "Sketches of London Characters" (No. 76.—On "Corn-cutters"), which says: "The most eminent amongst female operators is a dwarf, who, on a very genteel-looking card, thus describes herself: 'Mrs. Seymour Hill (late Miss Cordery), Corn-operator, 6, York Gate, Regent's Park.' This interesting little lady is one of the greatest London characters; she may be seen in all parts of the town, riding in a chaise in company with her brother, who is also a dwarf. They are both remarkable for having short arms, in addition to being curtailed of 'Nature's fair proportions' in other respects."

Dickens, we may add in conclusion, was then living at Devonshire Terrace, just across the road.

A Passed Master.

By ARTHUR MORRISON.

Illustrated by L. Daviel.

I.

IT is not often that the performances of genius can be explained. Indeed, it is probably correct to say that no achievement of genius has ever really been explained yet—a circumstance which gives this simple record a unique interest. For here is embodied the complete explanation of certain achievements of genius which made the reputation of a young artist who is very conspicuous among the Post-prandial Symbolists—which, as you know, is famous as the very latest and most advanced of all the schools, and much venerated as the least comprehensible. As I am so freely giving away the secret of this young painter's success, it will be obvious that I cannot mention his true name—it would be treachery.

Stanley Ulbster was not always a successful painter; for long, indeed, he was as unsuccessful as any painter in London—a phrase more expressive of all utter failure than any other I can invent A very enterprising—rashly enterprising—dealer had bought two of his pictures once, when first he came from Paris; but that was when the dealer—his name was Flack—was working on a sort of gambling "system." He bought a picture or two, "at a price," as he put it—meaning something not vastly differing from no price—from every young painter who was not utterly hopeless, on the chance of one here and there turning up trumps in the future.

Stanley Ulbster lodged in a small back room high in a house of a small back street in Bloomsbury—slept there, that is to say. But his studio was an excrescence on the roof of a tall house close by Charing Cross Road—a house which, by an extraordinary stroke of luck for the tenants, fell into a tangle of disputed succession soon after Ulbster began to owe his second quarter's rent. The result of this state of affairs was that so many people demanded the rent that nobody got it, and an application to the Court to appoint a receiver *ad interim* failed for some technical reason that nobody understood, but for which everybody was just as grateful, nevertheless. So it came about that for quite a long period of months Stanley Ulbster was enabled to provide himself with frequent dinners and luncheons, paid for out of money that would otherwise have been dissipated in rent.

It was not a studio to which the wealthy and the great might be expected to climb to sit for portraits. There was no lift, and, though Stanley Ulbster schemed a plan of fraudulently using the lift next door, and so reaching his eyrie by way of the roof, one could scarcely have expected a duchess to conspire in such an enterprise. The view of roofs was extensive and varied, and the dog, poultry, squirrel, and guinea-pig shops in St. Andrew's Street below contributed a smell which penetrated his very paint-boxes, and a chorus of sounds which lent a pleasing tone of wild life to the general London roar.

But no earthly state of affairs remains long unchanged, and there were movements in the world of Art, and even some movements in the courts of law; so that the prospect of the settlement of the dispute among the competing landlords drew nearer, and with it the vision of a really authorized rent-collector, with a demand for ruinous arrears. Things as regards the studio were likely to grow serious. As for the movements in the world of Art, they were revolutionary, for Art is always being revolutionized. Post-mortem Depressionism, with its extending jaws and yearnest eyes, had given way to Bedpost Expressionism (or something with a similar name), and now Post-prandial Symbolism had burst on the amazed public eye like a fire-work lit at the wrong end. All London flocked to the great exhibition of the imported Post-prandial Symbolists, and gasped. The great master Arsène Croutier was dead, but his canvases existed in swarms, and acres of space were covered by his devoted followers, Fumiste de Boulemiche and Barbouilleur de Boue. The subjects of most of their pictures were inviolable secrets, but in cases where the mystery leaked out vegetation was observed to be chiefly painted red and human flesh green.

The British public, when it recovered from gasping, began to laugh. It made up afternoon guessing parties, and with much research

discovered oblong human figures in pink forests, and other novel phenomena here and there; but it recoiled defeated from nine gems out of ten. Presently, however, it was whispered, and soon it was shouted, that millionaires were buying the pictures of Fumiste de Boulemiche and eke of Barbouilleur de Boue, while those of the great Arsène Croutier were already all in private possession and not to be bought at any price. Instantly all laughter was hushed. The reverence due to large cheques arose in the heart of the British public, and every sacrilegious voice was stilled. It was felt that an impropriety—even a profanity—had been committed, and haste was made to repair the error. The eyes of the afternoon visitors became opened to the glories of Croutier; they perceived the divine beauty of incoherence, the subtle message of incomprehension. The Post-prandial Symbolists became the rage.

Stanley Ulbster, like the rest of the world, saw and wondered, though less at the pictures than at the people; for he had seen some such pictures in Paris. He spent a long afternoon at the show, vastly interested in the crowd; and in that crowd, late in the afternoon, he perceived Flack, the dealer who had bought his two pictures so long ago.

Stanley Ulbster was not a man to miss an opportunity, sharpened as he was by long years blank of a single chance. He strolled casually in Flack's direction, caught his eye, and nodded gaily.

"How d'ye do—how d'ye do?" he said.

The dealer glanced up quickly, stared, and then broke into a smile of recognition. "Oh, how d'ye do?" he responded, offering his hand. "It's a long time since I saw you, and for the moment I'm hanged if I haven't forgotten your name!"

Ulbster repeated it.

"Oh, yes, yes, of course—now I remember. We did a little business together some time ago. As a matter of fact I was rather thinking of you just now, looking at all these things."

Before Ulbster had made up his mind whether to be pleased at this remark or not, the dealer went on.

"You're so adaptable, you know—change your style so readily. Nobody would have guessed that the 'Farmyard' I bought of you was by the same man as the 'Rosebowl.'"

Now both the pictures he had bought of Ulbster were landscapes, so that it seemed pretty certain that Flack was confusing him with somebody else. But no young artist should contradict a dealer, so Ulbster didn't.

"Now, what do you think of this style?" the dealer proceeded. "I can sell 'em, just now—at a price."

"Well," Ulbster replied, with careless deliberation, "I might think about it—if it were worth while."

"Don't think about it," Flack rejoined; "do it. Do it at once. No good wasting time with a boom like this. Go and pitch in, and I'll come round to your studio to-morrow—no, the next day. You must have time, of course. Get half-a-dozen done—go along!"

"Um," said Ulbster; "is that a commission for six?"

Flack was startled. "Why, no," he replied, "not a commission—I can't do things like that. I want to see what you make of it."

"Well, I'll see," the artist replied, striving not to seem anxious. "I might amuse myself that way—at any rate, I shall expect you at the studio on Wednesday. Will the morning do? Say eleven. Here's the address."

Ulbster strolled off easily, but once out of sight of the dealer he went for his studio by the shortest way in the longest strides.

Two or three new canvases were in stock, but a new canvas was an extravagance Ulbster rarely allowed himself; he laid a priming over an old picture and put it aside for his main effort. Meantime he tried a sketch on a grubby millboard.

II.

THE thing was not so easy as it looked. In course of years he had acquired an ingrained habit, when he painted, of painting something; and the more he laboured the more the something emerged, and the farther the performance travelled from Post-prandial Symbolism. That fine mystic incoherence of the new school faded with every touch of the brush, and the more he strove the more he painted it away.

Ulbster retired to Bloomsbury baffled. In the morning he visited the exhibition again. At that hour the rooms were almost empty of visitors, and he gave himself over to the unalloyed contemplation of Post-prandial Symbolism. He crept round the walls like a fish round the sides of a strange aquarium, drinking the spirit of Post-prandial Symbolism in quick gulps as he went. It had a strange effect on him. His eyes grew wilder at every canvas, and more and more like those of some goggling sea-creature bothered by the glass of his prison. His fingers strayed among his hair, pulled it and rumpled it in

the agony of his desperation; so that when at last he dashed forth, soaked with as much of the spirit of Post-prandial Symbolism as a human mind could imbibe in a morning, the man at the door hastily retreated behind the turnstile-counter, and an old lady who had just succeeded in crossing from the opposite side of the road turned and ran back again regardless of taxi-cabs.

Ulbster scurried through the streets, seeing all things in blue and yellow stripes with pink spots among them, till he reached his studio and hurled himself at the canvas he had prepared the afternoon before. Possessed with the demon of Post-prandial Symbolism, he fenced and stabbed at it with his biggest brushes till it was starred and striped and splashed and streaked with marks of the assault. Then he looked round him for some other canvas to batter. He had a curious sense of the Presence of the spirit of Post-prandial Symbolism, as of something living, something actually in the room, guiding and overseeing him; so much so that he felt a sort of dread of looking up from his work. Now, however, he did so, reaching for another canvas; and as he did it he was aware of a positive shadow overhanging him, so that involuntarily he glanced upward. Something—some intangible shadow, some shapeless phantom—vanished from the open skylight above even as he glanced; and with that the spell was broken.

"THE MORE HE LABOURED THE MORE THE SOMETHING EMERGED."

The sky shone clear and blue through the skylight, for it was a fine day. He turned to the grievously-assaulted canvas and viewed it uneasily. Surely it needed a careful touch here—and there, too. He replaced it on the easel and gave it the touches it seemed to require; then others, and then still more, for one touch always called imperatively for another. And in five minutes it dawned on him that he had ruined the picture, for it had become hopelessly intelligible.

He tried again, but with no success. He

snatched a belated lunch of biscuits and bottled beer, and smeared more canvases till he remembered that he was spoiling pictures already painted; further, he reflected that once the dealer had been brought to the studio there might be a possibility of selling some of his old pictures "at a price," if only he refrained from obliterating them with these Post-prandial scrambles. He finished the day by mounting a brand-new canvas on the easel and staring at it for half an hour, smoking moodily. He remembered that some of the most Post-prandial of all the Symbolists got their effects with streaks that left much of the white canvas exposed. But the fit was gone, and nothing more was to be said or done that day. He resolved to take another debauch of Symbolism in its native lair, and then dash back to this plain canvas. His palette he left as it was, unscraped, for that would leave the paint thicker and stiffer for the morning.

"THE MAN AT THE DOOR HASTILY RETREATED BEHIND THE TURNSTILE-COUNTER."

A night of starry and stripy nightmare ended in oversleeping, and it was ten ere he reached the studio. He turned the key and pushed the door open. Inside, a screen stood about the door and hid the most of the room; but even as he passed the screen he was aware once more of that strange passing shadow, that formless phantom that vanished ere he could fix it with his vision. He gazed upward, but the skylight was clear of all brooding shadow, standing a little open as he had left it.

But what brought him up standing and staring in the middle of the floor was the canvas on the easel. For where he had left it blank and white was a complete Post-prandial Symbolist picture, with all the sublime incoherence, the staring streakiness, the divine irresponsibility of the great Arsène Croutier himself. Stanley Ulbster stood and gasped. Here was Post-prandial Symbolism in essence—the very thing.

How had it come there? Stanley Ulbster found himself bemusedly gazing at his palette and brushes. He could not be sure of where and how he had left them, but clearly they had been used, and it interested him to perceive that the stale paint had gained the ropy coarseness that he had hoped for; in touch and quality of paint here was Post-prandial Symbolism *par excellence*.

But whence? He bethought him of his

starry and stripy nightmares, and accused himself of somnambulism. That was difficult to believe, nevertheless. There was the street door of the house in Bloomsbury to be negotiated twice, with its bolts, bars, and the key in the landlady's pocket. It seemed unlikely; and yet here was the picture—the thing he had been struggling to accomplish for the better part of two days.

He walked round the studio, thoroughly puzzled. He could not tell if things had been moved, for his habits were careless, and it was not easy to remember where he had left anything. The key of the room was in his own pocket, at any rate; nobody else could get into the place. He decided that he *must* have been sleep-walking. It must have been an extraordinary performance.

Still he wondered, and in the midst of his wondering he was surprised by Flack, who found the door open, tapped, and came in. The dealer coughed slightly, and had begun his "Good morning" when his eye fell on the picture on the easel. He paused, and ejaculated, "By Jove! you've got it there, Mr. Ulbster! Certainly you've got it there!"

Stanley Ulbster struggled desperately with his bewilderment, and made a shift to cock his eye jauntily at the picture and say, "Yes, I think it's come pretty well!"

"I'll take that one," the dealer remarked, "at a price."

The familiar phrase roused Ulbster's business instincts. "Well," he said, "it rather *depends* on the price, you know. I haven't shown it to anybody else yet. Things are not quite what they were when we did business last time, remember."

"Very well—you needn't show it to anybody else. Shall we say fifty?"

Stanley Ulbster said fifty, with some difficulty in suppressing a shout. He said it deprecatingly, as though he felt himself rather hardly treated.

"Of course," represented Flack, "there'll be more. Haven't you done some more?"

But he shook his head at the others. "No," he said, "you must do some more like this. You ought to knock off a lot of these in a week. I'll write a cheque for this one and come again."

Stanley Ulbster was far too elated with his new wealth to be able to work more that day, no matter how he might try to force himself. He set up another canvas and made a few other preparations, and that was as near work as he got. He went out to cash his cheque. He melted a little of the fifty pounds in a noble dinner, and he went to a theatre; and at night he lay awake wondering by what strange agency that picture had been evolved. It was dawn ere he fell asleep, and it was ten when he sought breakfast. Then he made for his studio in an odd frame of mind; for he was conscious of a certain internal excitement—a strange, agitating expectancy. It increased as he mounted the stairs, and as he opened his studio door it grew even painful. And, indeed, it was justified; for there, on the canvas he had left on the easel, was another Post-prandial Symbol!

If anything, it was better than the first. It could not have been more unintelligible, but now there was a certain serene deliberation about its promiscuousness; for the wild dash of improvisation was substituted an easy inconsequence, a more leisurely fortuitousness that bespoke a matured Post-prandialism, a Symbolism of more assurance.

Stanley Ulbster sat on a chair and gazed at the picture with something approaching superstitious fear. It was quite impossible to persuade himself that he had done it himself in a fit of sleep-walking; there was too much against such an explanation. But, whatever explanation might be the right one, he found it more comfortable to contemplate it with the door well open behind him.

He recalled all he had heard of the legends of brownies, kobolds, and Robin Goodfellows—those useful, benevolent gnomes of the under-world who in every country have been accredited with working in the night for favoured mortals. It was odd, it struck him for the first time, that the folk-lore of so many widely-sundered nations agreed so curiously as to the existence and activity of such spirits; almost certainly there must have been some foundation for so generally received a belief. Could it have any connection with that strange phenomenon, the frenzy, the inspiration of the artist? It was a mystery which had puzzled many, that amazing seizure, or possession, of a man and all his faculties, when he found himself inspired to create a work of art. Could it be that, when one spoke of the "spirit" of this, that, or the other method of art, one spoke with more meaning than was intended, and that the spirit was an actual separate existence, which did its work sometimes through the hands of the artist and sometimes independently, without their intervention? He well remembered his experience of two days earlier, how he had been possessed of the spirit of the new style of painting for a while, and how, like an actual presence, it appeared to leave him bodily. He thought of that strange shadow

on the skylight; and when from these reflections he turned to gaze on the new performance drying before his eyes, he felt an inclination, difficult to resist, to get out of that studio, so strangely haunted, and clear his brain with a walk in the street.

He shut the door and descended the stairs, with an odd sense of disembarrassing himself of an invisible companionship. He walked into the street, stared at the shops, felt the reality of the things about him, and called himself a fool.

He dropped in at Flack's, leaving a message that a new picture was ready, and then walked slowly back to the studio, to meet a new astonishment. For the picture had been carried farther in his absence! There was no possible mistaking the fact. Several wildly irresponsible streaks and wriggles of paint crossed and intermingled with those he had already seen; and he could not disguise from himself that here again, from the Post-prandial standpoint, was an improvement. There was now a richness and completeness of confusion wholly beyond what had existed before—something that even Arsène Croutier himself had scarcely achieved in his most admired efforts.

Ulbster walked about the room and stared into every corner. He pulled aside the curtain that obscured the side window, threw up the sash, and gazed out over the roofs and chimney-pots. No possible explanation presented itself, though now he confronted the enigma with far more equanimity than before. So much so that it struck him to profit by an ingenious device. He propped up the picture before a large mirror, took a new canvas, and carefully copied the reversed reflection, taking care to exchange the colour of each streak for that of another—blue for yellow, red for purple, and so forth. This occupied some three-quarters of an hour, for he was careful to imitate every stroke with extreme accuracy; but in the end he was possessed of two Post-prandial Symbols apparently wholly unlike.

Flack's delight was boundless. "This," he said, when he arrived in the afternoon, "is really something like. Go on like this, and I'll make it a one-man show, and knock all the Frenchmen to fits. But why only two? Surely you can turn out three or four of this sort of thing a day if you like—a dozen if you have your lunch in the studio? The others did!"

"The others?" queried Ulbster.

"Why, yes. I didn't mean to have mentioned it, but I put one or two on to this idea before I saw you. I didn't buy their pictures—they weren't a bit of good, or I shouldn't have come to you. They were like most of those you showed me yesterday—things in 'em that anybody could guess at once. I'll take these, of course, at the same price."

But Stanley Ulbster had been thinking about that matter, and shook his head pensively. "Well, no," he said, "not exactly the same. I think I could get a trifle more for these—especially as they're a bit larger. Certainly a hundred apiece."

"No, no; that's absurd," replied Flack, with some alarm. "You'd get nothing like that."

"Well, perhaps not," the painter admitted, judicially. "But I could try."

"No, no; play the game now. You must admit it was I who put you on to this. Come, I'll meet you handsomely. I'll give you a hundred and fifty for these two on condition that you let me have the next half-dozen I select, of this size or larger, at the same price. Surely that's good enough?"

"Well," the artist replied, with some show of thoughtful reluctance, "perhaps it is. It'll save trouble, I suppose. All right."

Stanley Ulbster was a successful painter already. He sat down and made a little calculation that by the aid of his mirror, an almost infinite variation of colours, and the use of canvases of different shapes and sizes—upright, oblong, sideways, upside down—he could evolve some hundreds more Post-prandial masterpieces from the three already in existence. He took a walk round the Post-prandial Symbolist show before closing time, and triumphed to perceive that he—or his "ghost" for him—was the equal of the great Croutier at his best, and by far the superior of Fumiste de Boulemiche and his colleague de Boue. He had a dinner that night that made the recollection of yesterday's seem poor; but it did nothing to improve his night's sleep. He was excited and restless, and slept in snatches; and in the early morning he arose with a definite purpose in his mind.

His natural curiosity could be stifled no longer. Prudence bade him leave well alone, but, as everybody knows, only let the fight last and curiosity must beat prudence at some time. He oiled the key of his studio, and regretted that he had not thought to oil the lock also, before he had left. There was always a creak, but perhaps oil on the key would overcome that; at any rate, he was resolved to enter the studio early and quietly. He started at seven o'clock, vastly to the amazement of

the little servant-maid who was already busy on the front steps of the Bloomsbury lodging.

He found himself in some trepidation as he mounted the stairs, and near the door he absolutely stopped in doubt. What he was doing might spoil the run of luck; but, after all, he could surely acquire the trick himself in time, and meantime there was the looking-glass dodge. He *must* penetrate the mystery before him. He insinuated his oiled key and began to turn it very slowly. . . .

The oil was useless. There was a check in the turn and then the lock squeaked as loud as ever. With that he snapped it back and dashed in at the door. There was a crash, a bounce, and a strange, inhuman squeal; the screen went over, some dark brown thing dashed up the easel and through the sky-light, and the easel rocked and fell; and there, grinning and jabbering through the opening of the skylight, was a large and angry monkey. He had barely seen it when his palette came hurtling at his head, struck the wall, and, falling face down on the floor, deposited there yet one more Post-prandial Symbol. Then the skylight shut with a slam and the spirit of Post-prandial Symbolism vanished from above it.

"HE DASHED IN AT THE DOOR."

For one dumb-foundered moment Stanley Ulbster stood and stared about him. Then he realized that a fortune was escaping him over the tiles. He dashed to the window, flung it open, and gazed downward. Hand under hand, with waving tail, his brownie was retreating by way of a water-pipe, gnashing its teeth as it went. Ulbster whistled and snapped his fingers invitingly, as one does to a dog; but the Artist Unknown misunderstood his advances and chattered more savagely than ever. Springing from the water-pipe, the last of the Post-prandial Symbolists alighted on a low roof, whence he continued his retreat toward the bird and beast shops of St. Andrew's Street, turning to face Ulbster from time to time, and reviling his fellow-craftsman with bitter gibberings.

Since blandishments would not draw the fugitive, Ulbster resolved to watch the direction of his retreat, with a view to the purchase of so valuable an auxiliary. Plainly he was making for the largest of the dog and poultry shops, at the corner of a narrow alley leading into the main street; and presently, at a trap-door in the roof of that same shop, a man became visible, peering anxiously, and seeking concealment behind a chimney-stack. The Symbolist drew near the trap-door, and the man craned his neck eagerly—too eagerly, in fact, for, with a sudden leap aside and a fresh burst of angry chatter, the nameless rival of Arsène Croutier made for an adjoining roof by way of another water-pipe.

Seeing he was discovered, the man abandoned his concealment, and with affectionate greetings offered nuts from his pocket, and a banana. The Symbolist was sorely tempted, and paused in his flight; but an incautious movement on the man's part alarmed him afresh, and off he went on a headlong scamper over the adjoining roofs.

The man disappeared down the trap-door, and Ulbster saw that he must join the chase from the street or lose his colleague altogether. He ran his best, and when he reached St. Andrew's Street he found that the hunt was up, and already many men and boys were

scuttling up by-streets, scaling ladders, climbing scaffold-poles, scrambling over roofs, and dodging about chimney-stacks with shouts and chevyings that had already converted the evasion of the fugitive into a desperate and frenzied flight. Over roofs, across brick precipices, down pipes, up poles, along parapets he went, a dazzling and unapproachable example to all Post-prandial Symbolists; and Ulbster, having ascertained that his owner was the man of the corner shop, left the crowd and returned to his studio.

Late in the afternoon he descended into St. Andrew's Street, and made inquiries at the dog-fancier's shop. The shopkeeper shook his head mournfully, and his partner said, solemnly: "Gawn. Fell a victim."

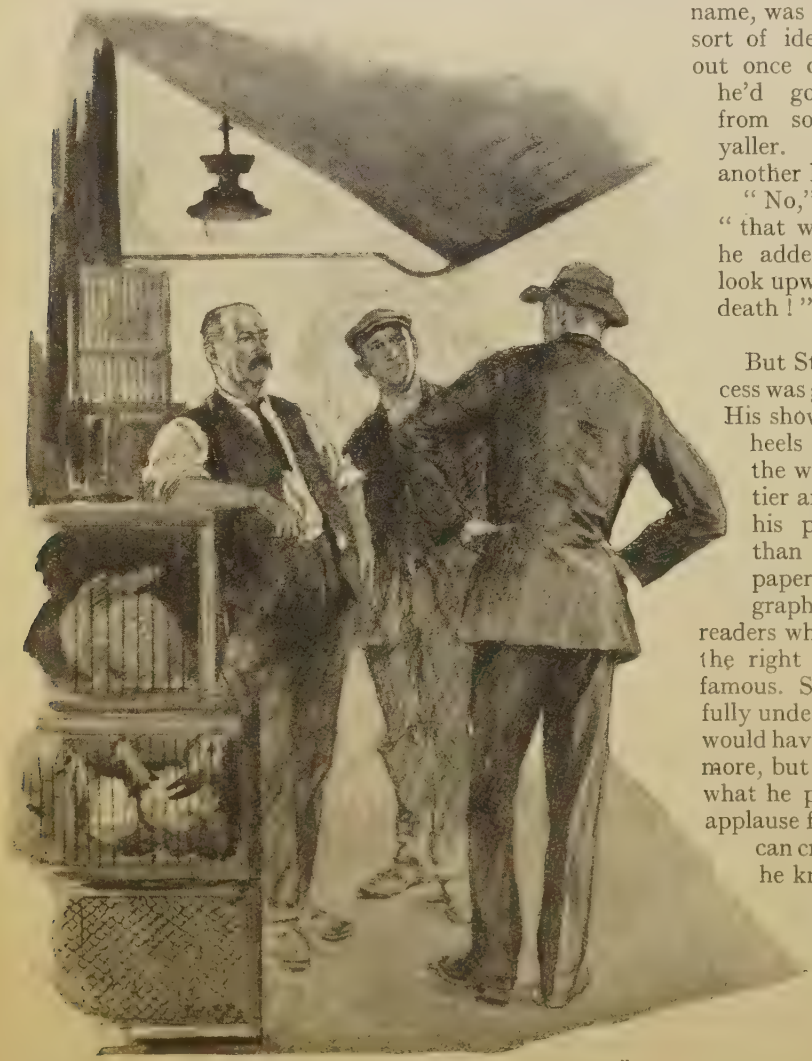
"Pore old Pongo," the shopkeeper explained; "they frightened him fair off 'is 'ead, that silly, 'owlin' crowd. After about an hour and a 'alf's chase, he got into that big brewery over there past the Dials. He dodged 'em this way an' 'e dodged 'em that, an' at last he got into the settlin'-'use, and ran round the edge of the vats till he got bosky in the 'ead with the smell o' the beer an' tumbled in."

"Drowned?" queried Ulbster.

The shopkeeper nodded gloomily.

"No money would ha' bought him this time yesterday," he said. "He was a genius, was that monkey, and we was trainin' him to do the Consul business. There was a fortune in Pongo at the 'alls. I can't make out now how he got out; but he was equal to any door or winder or skylight as you could name, was Pongo; an' I got a sort of idea he must ha' been out once or twice lately, 'cos he'd got paint on him from somewhere—blue an' yaller. We'll never see another like Pongo."

"No," agreed the partner, "that we won't. But lor," he added, with a brighter look upward, "wot a glorious death!"



"WE'LL NEVER SEE ANOTHER LIKE PONGO."

But Stanley Ulbster's success was great and immediate. His show came quick on the heels of the great one of the works of Arsène Croutier and his disciples, and his puzzles were better than theirs. The popular papers printed photographs, and gave prizes to readers who guessed which was the right way up, and he was famous. So that, if he had only fully understood his public, he would have troubled himself no more, but would have painted what he pleased with perfect applause from everybody who can criticize a picture once he knows the name of the artist. But he would seem to be still a little uneasy, for he is quite recently reported to have been trying to buy a monkey.

"My First Drawing."

The First Appearance in Print of Leading Black-and-White Artists.

THE publication of his first drawing to an artist who has achieved fame in black and white would seem to be an event of hardly less importance than the acceptance of the first picture by the Royal Academy to an artist whose ambition has expressed itself in oil and water-colour. This impression has been confirmed by the results of an inquiry which we have made among our chief graphic humorists. With one or two exceptions in the case of the older men —and it is not every R.A. who remembers his first Academy picture — they were able to answer our inquiry with a more or less vivid recollection of the circumstances under which they took this first step on the ladder of success.

Mr. Max Beerbohm, who was the first of these artists, is still so young that in his case there could be no tax upon the memory. At the age of fifteen he published his first drawing in the pages of the Charterhouse School illustrated magazine, the *Greyfriar*. It took the form of a page of sketches of "The New Boys' Exam.," this being the second subject in a series entitled "The Humours of School Life."

"It was signed, if I remember rightly," says Mr. Beerbohm, "with the initials 'H. M. B.,' the signature which I continued to use for some years. At that time, of course, I had no technical knowledge of the processes of reproduction. I haven't much now. I believe I used an ordinary pencil on rough blue paper."

This drawing in the *Greyfriar* was followed by several others before the artist left the school in 1890. He contributed one or two humorous figures to the illustrations of an article on Guildford, and gave three "Charter-

"THE HUMOURS OF SCHOOL LIFE"—BY MAX BEERBOHM.

house Types"—the photographer, the debater, and the vocalist—as well as a page of "Boulevard Types," this last contribution, which is very significant of what was to come, being evidently the result of a holiday trip to Paris. Mr. Beerbohm's first appearance as a professional artist, it is of interest to know, was made in THE STRAND MAGAZINE, with a page of "Club Types." This was in 1893, just before he left Oxford.

The first drawing published by Mr. Leslie Ward was in the journal with which, under the *nom de guerre* of "Spy," his fame is now associated. It was, in fact, the first of his series of *Vanity Fair* cartoons, the subject being the late Professor Owen ("Old Bones"). It appeared in 1873.

"It was done from memory," Mr. Leslie Ward says, "after seeing him at a garden-party at Lord Levin's, in Roehampton Lane, near which the Professor lived. Sir John E. Millais paid me the great compliment (after seeing this caricature amongst many other sketches of a similar character) of recommending my work and introducing me to Mr. Gibson Bowles, the founder of *Vanity Fair*, who desired to publish this as my first."

PROFESSOR OWEN ("OLD BONES").
BY LESLIE WARD ("SPY").

Mr. J. A. Shepherd has a very amusing story to tell of his first-published drawing, and the story must be told fully in order to explain the seemingly inexplicable head of an apparently impossible dog which is reproduced below. Mr. Shepherd was a dog-lover before he became—with the aid of tuition

"AN IMPOSSIBLE DOG"—BY J. A. SHEPHERD.

from Mr. Alfred Bryan—a professional artist, and we are not much surprised to learn that it was in the former *rôle* that at the age of sixteen he first drew for publication—to adorn the cover of the catalogue of a bulldog show held at Hackney in 1883.

"I made six or seven designs of a bulldog's head for the committee to select from. One was finally decided upon—a fair representation of a typical dog, I thought. Two young friends of mine, one acting as Hon. Secretary to the show and a great enthusiast for the breed, the other also an ardent bulldog lover, a member of the committee, came to advise me as I progressed with the drawing.

"At first I copied the design selected by the committee on to the wood-block. This was thought passably good, but my enthusiastic friends were not quite content—they would have a head that was so typical of the breed that it should fire the enthusiasm of all bulldog breeders—a head that should act as a rebuke to those who would let well alone.

"'Make his ears smaller and shorten his face,' said one.

"'Give him more chop and wrinkle,' said the other.

"'Now eyes wider apart and a better turn-up.'

"'Here, lend me the pencil—I see what it wants.'

"The horror was passed from hand to hand, and so on to the engraver; and what little was left of canine portraiture the engraver most surely combed completely out."

Mr. Shepherd remembers that the *Field*, in reporting the show, suggested that the com-

IMAGE OF SEKI-SAN.

BY E. T. REED.

mittee of the next show would be well advised to have a *bulldog's* head on the cover of the catalogue, instead of a representation of a tubercled potato. "And this," Mr. Shepherd exclaims, "was my first published drawing!"

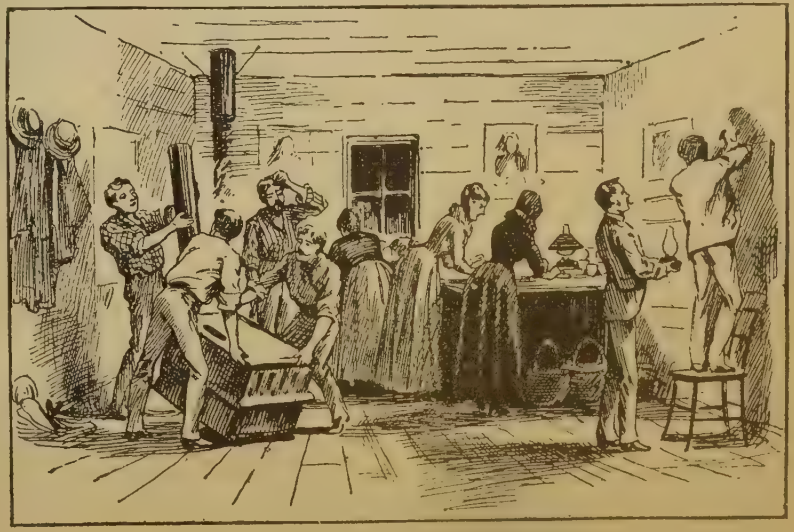
The catalogue has, of course, long since disappeared into limbo. But Mr. Shepherd's frontispiece has been resuscitated by Mr. Edgar Farman in his book, "The Bulldog; a Monograph," and from this volume we have reproduced it. Mr. Farman introduces the illustration with these words: "The honorary secretary for this show was Mr. G. J. Padbury, who distinguished himself (it's a wonder he did not extinguish himself) by producing a catalogue embellished with the following drawing!"

There was no such element of freakishness about Mr. E. T. Reed's first appearance in print. The illustrator of "Pre-Historic Peeps," and recently of "From Behind the Speaker's Chair," accompanied his father, Sir Edward J. Reed, M.P., on a tour through Japan in 1879. On their return Sir Edward published a book on the country—which was then somewhat of a *terra incognita*—and to this work the future *Punch* artist, then about nineteen years old, contributed several small pencil drawings which he had made *en route*, the rest of the illustrations being from photographs and from the work of a Japanese artist. The first of these drawings, "The Image of Seki-San," a Japanese shrine, is given here.

"They were small and painstaking," adds Mr. Reed, "and not (consciously) humorous, and they were 'invested with artistic merit' (as they used to say in the Belt case) by the subtle and gifted hand of Mr. Whymper, the engraver."

It was ten years later before Mr. Reed became a member of the staff of *Punch*, but in the meantime he had made occasional appearances in various periodicals.

On looking up his past records at his house in Kensington Park Road, Mr. John Hassall found that his first-published drawing was made during his brief experiment as a farmer in Manitoba. It was sent from Canada—as the record showed—on February 10th, 1890, to the *Daily Graphic*. The "drawing" really



"A SURPRISE PARTY"—BY JOHN HASSALL, R.I.

Readings from Shakespeare—No. V.
"And, toward the education of your daughters,
I here bestow a simple instrument."
—*Taming of the Shrew.*

BY HARRY FURNISS.

consisted of five distinct sketches descriptive of a "surprise party," an American invention which had just been taken across the border into Canada.

Mr. Hassall thus describes the incident out of which this artistic effort arose :—

"I and a partner had just finished putting up our house in Clanwilliam, fifteen miles from the nearest townlet, Minnedosa, in Manitoba, when one winter's night we were inundated by sleigh-loads of visitors, each load bringing cakes and other refreshment, and lamps and a fiddle. The first-comers pulled down our stove-pipe and deposited the stove outside in the snow, hammered in nails anywhere suitable and hung up their lamps, and proceeded to have a dance till about four in the morning, when they left us to put the house right again. On the principle that the misfortunes of others amuse the majority (*vide* the man who steps on orange-peel), I sent a series of pen-and-ink sketches to show those at home what a real surprise party was like."

The artist adds as a sort of "N.B." — "We enjoyed the dance most of all, I fancy."

Mr. Hassall was then twenty-two. It was more than two years before he published anything further. In the meantime he had abandoned agriculture for art, and had entered upon a course of study in Antwerp and Paris.

Mr. Harry Furniss has confessed to the production of a *Schoolboys' Punch*, wherein by the ingenious use of his pencil he curried favour with his masters. But this was only a manuscript journal ; his first printed appearance was in the short-lived Irish *Punch*, called *Zozimus*, on August 31st, 1870. Mr. Furniss, who was born at Wexford in 1854, spent his youth in Dublin, and he owed his early introduction to illustrated journalism—as he has acknowledged in "The Confessions of a Caricaturist"—to his friendship with Mr. A. M. Sullivan, afterwards a Nationalist M.P., the founder and editor of *Zozimus* in the interests of the Nationalist cause.

His first contribution appeared when the paper had been running for about three months, and took the form of one of a series of Shakespearean skits, the quotation illus-

BULL-FINCHES ("ROBIN'S BREAKFAST").
BY LOUIS WAIN.
By permission of "The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News."

trated being from "The Taming of the Shrew":—

> And, towards the education of your daughters,
> I here bestow a simple instrument.

It was followed by occasional contributions, similarly signed "H. Fs." until the demise of the paper in the following year. These drawings show remarkable qualities in a youth of sixteen; but then the *Schoolboys' Punch* was not a mere flash in the pan of precocity. At the age of fifteen, as Mr. Furniss confesses, he had his own models, and he was "drawing Venuses from the life" when other boys had to be content with reading about them in the classic authors.

Some admirers of Mr. Louis Wain's cats will, perhaps, be disappointed to learn that his first-published drawing was not of the feline tribe. The artist was somewhat unfortunate in the circumstances of its appearance in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* Christmas Number of 1881. It was a full-page picture of two bullfinches on laurel bushes in a snow-covered garden. Through some error, it came out with the title, "Robin's Breakfast."

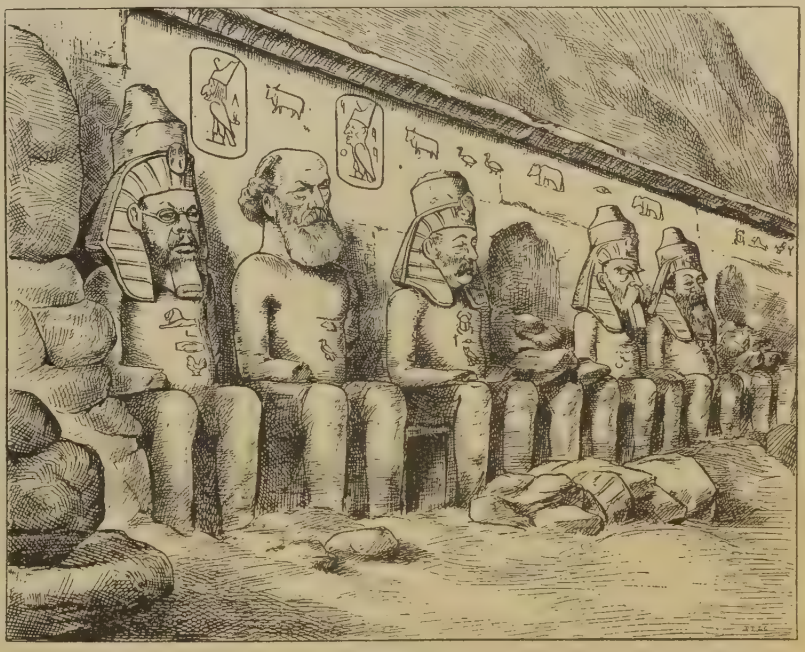
"The drawing caused me to be very severely chaffed in consequence," says Mr. Wain, "and I did some thirty other large drawings before I could persuade the editor to take another one—but persistency told."

This first drawing was signed "L. Wain" and has, it must be admitted, little in common with the "Louis Wains" that the world has since delighted in. Mr. Wain, then a young man of twenty-one and an assistant master (after having been a pupil) in the West London School of Art, was but feeling his way to the groove of work he has made his own, his first cat subject appearing in 1883, when he had become a regular member of the staff of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*. The artist was originally trained for the musical profession, and music is still one of his chief recreations.

Sir Francis Carruthers Gould's reply to our question was one of blank despair:—

"I have not the slightest recollection of the first caricature I ever published. I began when I was quite a boy. I have no examples of what I did, and I don't know how, after so long a lapse of time, to trace anything."

In these circumstances we have to content ourselves with the first publication which "F. C. G." can remember and trace. This proves to be a volume of satire in both sketch and letterpress, produced by Sir Francis while a member of the Stock Exchange. It is entitled "Explorations in the Sit-tee Desert and Discovery of the Great Temple of the Bull and Bear." The ostensible author is an antiquarian of the year 3999, who records the discovery of the ruins of our Stock Exchange, and from the evidence they afford him propounds a complete and most amusing theory as to the manners and customs of its inhabitants. The humour of the dozen large pages, both literary and pictorial, would doubtless be best appreciated by those to whom it is more particularly addressed; but as a very early specimen of "F. C. G.'s" style the picture reproduced above will have a general interest.



"EXPLORATIONS IN THE SIT-TEE DESERT AND DISCOVERY OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF THE BULL AND BEAR"—BY SIR F. C. GOULD.

Fellow-Passengers.

By BERTRAM SMITH.

Illustrated by W. Dewar.

I HAVE never been able to gather why it is that this sort of thing should always happen to me. Numbers of men seem to pass through life without ever finding themselves in a really embarrassing position, but my progress from my earliest youth has been a mere succession of singular predicaments. I suppose there is a fate in it, for I certainly do not set out to look for them. The process began at the age of three, when I was "playing house" in a furniture-removing van and was transported to a distant part of the city before I could make my presence known. It was days before I was restored to my sorrowing parents, as I proved to be quite unable to give an account of myself, and knew only that my nurse's name was Betty, and that our number was sixty-three. And it has gone on ever since. I am always losing my luggage on the way to a smart wedding or receiving important telegrams when I am under an anæsthetic or turning up at the wrong tea-party; and I have long ago registered a vow that on my wedding-day I shall approach the ceremony, in case of accidents, with a ring in every pocket.

It is useless to butt against the inevitable, and I flatter myself that I am now capable of accepting the situation, whatever it may be, with a certain calm philosophy, and generally with a cheerful determination to go through with the thing. I take no credit for that. Life would not be possible for me under any other conditions. And I have not been without my successes. During the two years that I spent in America I acted as cook for a whole winter in a fashionable hotel in the Rockies; not that I had any knowledge of cooking when I undertook the duties, but simply because there had been a strike among the staff the manager was reluctant to close his doors in the height of the season, and there seemed to be no one else capable of stepping into the breach. I was also snowed up for ten days on the Canadian Pacific, and nearly died of typhoid at Klondike. And then, at last, I bought a farm in Canada and went into partnership with Jim Holland. It was only some six months before we were caught in the great forest fire which turned that whole neighbourhood into a wilderness. I got away myself with a horse and my pyjamas, but the rest of my goods and chattels had to go, and poor Jim lost his life.

It was then that I decided to come home for a period of well-earned recreation before embarking on my projected tour through Mexico. I had a further reason for this in the fact that Jim had left a widow, whom I volunteered to convey back to her father's home in Dorsetshire, with her small baby, some nine or ten months old. I had only met Mrs. Holland on one or two occasions, as our new farm-house had not been ready to receive her at the time of the fire; but I booked our passages by the *Gigantic*, and we arranged to foregather in New York. I little knew what I was letting myself in for.

As soon as I had seen my own luggage on board I went down to Mrs. Holland's state-room, where I found her beginning to unpack.

"Do you know," she began, "such an annoying thing has happened. My nurse has been taken ill at the last moment, and I have had to leave her behind."

I said I was very sorry, and volunteered to help her in any way I could during the voyage.

"It's awfully good of you, Mr. Norwood," she said, with a charming smile. "I honestly believe you would be more useful with a baby than most men."

I thanked her very much, and assured her that I was prepared to enter upon my duties at a moment's notice.

"Well," she said, laughing, "I'll take you at your word. We don't sail for fully an hour yet, and I want to go on shore to see if I can find my cousin, Mrs. Gernon. She promised to come and see me off. Will you look after baby till I come back? I sha'n't be long, and I don't expect she will wake."

The baby was sleeping peacefully, and I stretched myself upon the other berth, determined that nothing would induce me to leave my post till Mrs. Holland returned. The state-room was at the end of a little

"I SEATED MYSELF UPON THE BERTH, LIGHTED A PIPE, AND FACED THE SITUATION."

passage in a quiet part of the ship, and all the noisy traffic of corridors and decks was muffled by the distance to a mere continuous hum and murmur. I should remark that I had two tiring night journeys behind me, but all the same there was no excuse for me whatever. I fell asleep. It is not really surprising. It is exactly what I might have expected myself to do. When I was awakened at last by a cry from my fellow-passenger, two prime facts at once leapt to my consciousness—the ship was ploughing steadily through the water, and nothing was to be seen of Mrs. Holland.

When I had established the fact beyond any doubt that the widow had been left

behind I returned to the state-room and locked the door. Then I seated myself upon the berth, lighted a pipe, and faced the situation. The baby had miraculously fallen asleep again, and remained in blissful ignorance of the tragic change that had cast a shadow on her innocent career, so I was free to think the matter out to a conclusion.

It seemed to me that two courses were open to me. I might either advertise my position among the passengers, throw myself upon the mercy of some motherly soul, and hand over the baby to her care. I had no doubt there would be plenty of volunteers. On the other hand, I might go through with it single-handed. From the first of these courses I shrank instinctively. I shuddered at the terrible publicity that awaited my confession. In imagination I saw that innocent cherub suddenly regarded as the heroine of the ship. I saw her handed round among admiring young women, told to "show how big she was," gaily reproved for kicking off her socks, and put through her list of pitiable little tricks like a performing terrier. I saw her dipped into her bath in the centre of a ring of spectators. I saw her kissed by the captain, and heralded by paragraphs in the newspapers on her arrival as the "ship's baby," with a diverting account of her motherless condition.

On the other hand, I had brought this thing upon myself, and I was bound to see it through. I, who had cooked a dinner for ninety guests at the Grand Hotel Panorama with no further knowledge of the art than what I obtained from one night's study of "Mrs. Beeton's Household Management," was surely capable, I told myself, of looking after a single baby for a single week. As a matter of fact, it became clear to me later that the ship in general had jumped to the conclusion that the baby was mine. The thing was forced upon me. I may have been considered eccentric for travelling alone with a child of that age and without a nurse, but no one had the slightest doubt that I was the father. Then and there I came to my decision. Solemnly—for one week—I adopted the baby.

It seemed to me that in the circumstances I had at least a right to give her a name of my own choosing. At first I thought of calling her Gladys, after my mother, but then another idea occurred to me, and I christened her Rebecca, after a girl I had met in Colorado.

As soon as Rebecca awoke I arose, took a long breath, set my teeth, and lifted her on to my knee. Then in a few concise words I put the situation before her, appealed to her better feelings, and—as I felt—came to a satisfactory understanding. She took it wonderfully well, but there was something in her self-satisfied smile at the close of my remarks which made it clear to me that she knew as well as I did that I was completely at her mercy. And then I got to work. Propping the baby in the corner of the berth, I began to unpack, from Mrs. Holland's portmanteaux, various belongings and accessories of the nursery. During this process, which occupied the best part of an hour, I contrived to entertain her with a succession of playthings; but before I was finished she had exhausted the possibilities of my watch, pipe, tobacco-pouch, eye-glasses, and a tumbler belonging to the White Star Company; she had torn a newspaper to ribbons and scattered a box of matches far and wide, made an heroic effort to swallow a strap, and crawled once to the edge of the berth and toppled over into a portmanteau.

As I contemplated the results of my unpacking, laid out upon the other berth, it came home to me with staggering force that, in the management of babies, I had much to learn. Here was a perfect arsenal of complicated appliances. There were bottles, thermometers, spirit-lamps, sponges, a small rubber bath, bewildering diminutive garments of all sorts, and half a hundred other things that I didn't even know the names of. But one grand discovery I made, to which I attribute almost the whole of the success of the enterprise. It was a little ragged book called "Baby Day by Day," published, apparently, by those great benefactors of mankind, Messrs. Bollins and Co., and to be used in conjunction with their well-known food "for infants and invalids." It seemed to me that I was on safe ground with Bollins' food, as if the baby were seasick she would qualify as a fitting subject for it in both capacities.

Rebecca was getting pretty fractious by the time I had finished, and feverishly I turned over the leaves of my priceless guide until I found a paragraph "On Preparing a Bottle." I was quite in the thick of the thing by this time, and the hours flew by unheeded while I struggled with countless problems, and Rebecca went through all the stages of resentment from passive resistance to uproarious rebellion. Never shall I forget those strenuous hours when the joy of battle awoke within me, and the whole of my faculties, mental and muscular, were brought into

"I CONTRIVED TO ENTERTAIN HER WITH A SUCCESSION OF PLAYTHINGS."

play. At any moment I could have rung for the stewardess; more than once I thought of calling in the doctor. But I am glad to cherish now the recollection that I coped with the whole of that desperate situation single-handed, prepared and administered a bottle, undressed and bathed, brushed and polished the baby, and, finally—after an overwhelming bout of screaming, which must have lasted fully an hour—sang her to sleep with an alternation of hymns and comic songs, and planted her firmly in her cot. The bath itself was a most exciting episode, and nothing surprised me more than the way in which Rebecca wriggled and squirmed on my knee with eel-like contortions. It seemed almost impossible to get a grip of her.

I lighted my pipe and looked round upon a scene of indescribable chaos, suggestive of an untidy night-nursery and a left-luggage office crowded indiscriminately together into the smallest space. I was myself not a little dishevelled, but I fished out my watch from under the wash-stand, put on my coat, brushed my hair with the soft little white brush, and generally pulled myself together.

It was not until I heard the dinner-gong that I reflected that I had eaten nothing since an early breakfast—unless one reckons some small quantities of Bollins' food consumed in the process of testing the temperature. Then at last I rang for the stewardess. I explained to her that I had had a little difficulty that afternoon, as the baby was unaccustomed to travelling, but that it was all over now. I would be obliged to her if she would kindly tidy the room while I went up to dinner, and keep an eye upon the child until I returned. Then I bolted, leaving her no opportunity to reply.

I was making a very hearty meal, and had almost succeeded in dismissing my responsibilities from my mind, when I looked up to find the stewardess at my elbow. She was a comfortable-looking, friendly soul, and there was none of that pitying expression in her face that I had feared to see, for I had a curious sort of feeling that I was being found out. She asked me in a discreet whisper if I didn't think the baby was a little too warm. She seemed to be "perspiring dreadful." When I came to think of it, I had crowded an unconscionable amount of bedding on to the cot, for the last words I had read in "Baby Day by Day" were in the form of a terrible warning—"Guard against sudden chills." I assured her I would come down in a few minutes, and asked her in the meanwhile to take what steps she thought advisable.

The cabin was in admirable order when I returned, and the stewardess was silently putting the finishing touches to her work. She paused in the doorway just as she was leaving the room and addressed me in a hesitating manner.

"Don't you think, sir," she said, "the little darling would be more comfortable in her nightdress?"

I had an unpleasant sensation of being pulled up short. What the garment was that I had put on to the wriggling Rebecca I am even now unable to say. Considerations of delicacy prevented me from inquiring too closely. But I could have sworn it was a nightdress. Apparently I was wrong, but I had no intention of giving myself away.

"Well, yes," I said, thoughtfully, "perhaps she would. The truth is, it was getting near dinner-time, and I couldn't find the nightdresses at the moment."

"I could come and change it for her, when you wake her for her bottle," the helpful stewardess went on, and again I had food for reflection. So she had to have another bottle? Just as well I found that out.

The end of it was that the stewardess came in about ten o'clock and assisted me to give Rebecca her supper and settle her finally for the night. I was much relieved to be able to share my responsibility, but at the same time I suffered for my weakness. It was the thin end of the wedge. From that moment the stewardess began to encroach more and more upon my duties, till at last I used to find her in the cabin at all sorts of unexpected times, talking to Rebecca in a steady flow of idiotic utterances, preparing bottles, and always ready to make suggestions, which, while I admit I adopted most of them, I resented in the bottom of my heart. Finally, on the third day, I found that if I was to call the child my own we must come to an understanding. I asked her in set terms if she thought she had bought that baby, and indignantly refused her permission to give her her bath. I felt rather a brute afterwards, for she took it very meekly. She merely said she could not resist the little duckie, and that she reminded her of a niece of her own in Boston. We came at last to an amicable agreement, by which she was allowed to attend for certain hours of the day. She was perfectly discreet and not given to gossip, and this was a great point in her favour. For, of course, I made mistakes. The worst of them occurred on the first morning, when I had taken Rebecca up on deck. There is no need for me to relate the story here. I believe the captain of the ship tells it with some gusto, among his anecdotes of passengers he has known. The truth is that I got hold of the wrong baby. I am quite at a loss, on looking back, to understand how I could have made such a mistake. For it seems to me now that, far from all babies being alike, it is the grown people who are apt to be alike, and that babies lose their marked individuality in later years. But, of course, I was new to it then. The kid that I took down to the cabin went to sleep without protest on the berth, and I only discovered my error when I heard in the smoking-room a tragic tale of a mother who was wandering about the ship disconsolate, declaring that she had lost her child, and refusing to be satisfied with the only spare baby that could be found on deck. Then I know now that babies should not be tossed violently in the air immediately after taking sustenance. That I learned by experience. And other blunders I made over which I draw a veil. But before we were half-way across the Atlantic I became completely absorbed in Rebecca. I saw practically nothing of my fellow-passengers, though I have reason to

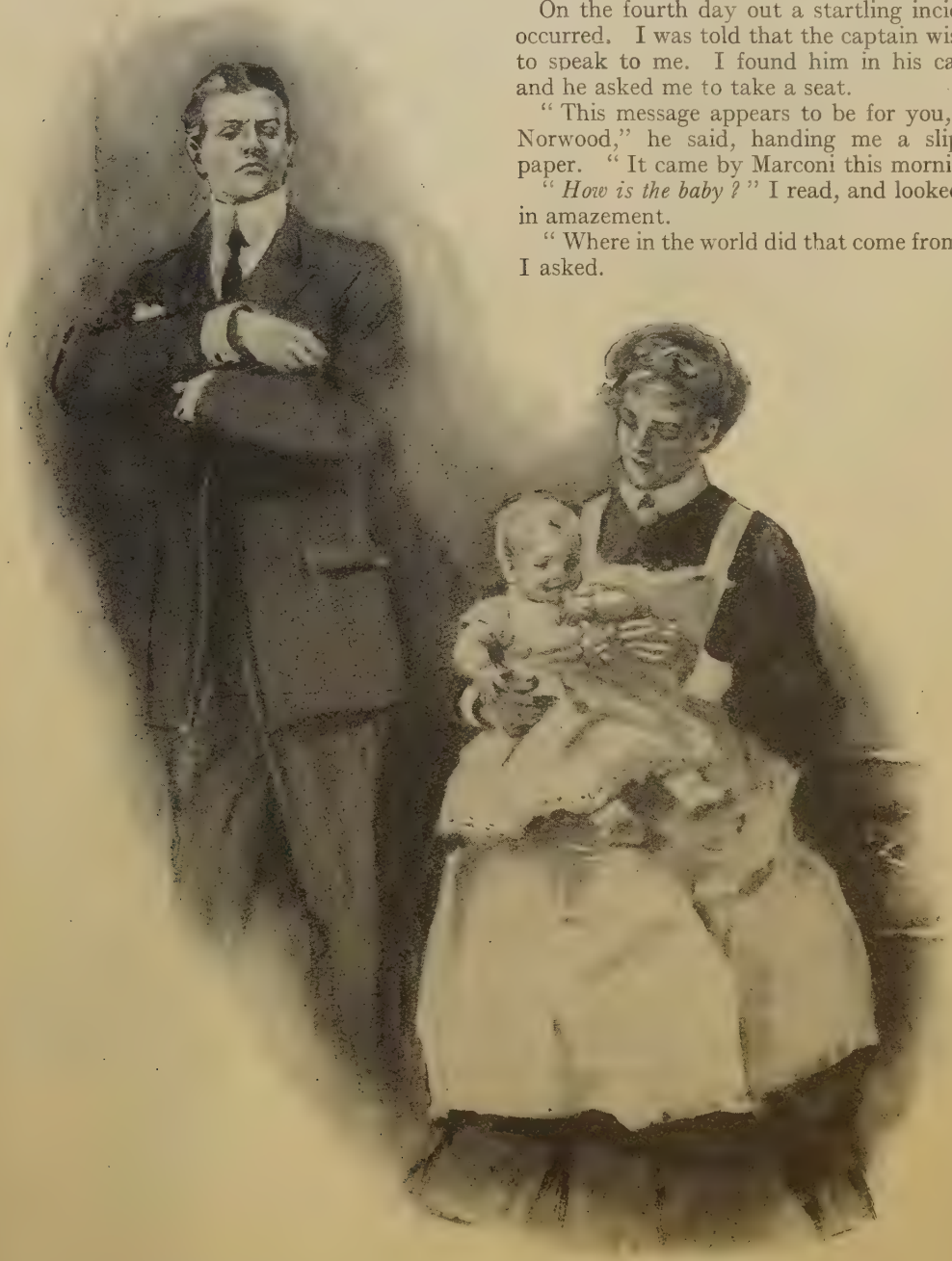
believe that the young widower travelling alone with his infant child was regarded by them as an interesting and pathetic character. There was always so much to be done, and when all other occupations failed I used to borrow the kitchen scales from one of the stewards and weigh the baby. I have still the treasured document of the weight chart among my possessions, made out with scrupulous care, and showing a steady upward curve. I admit that, in order to get a curve to my satisfaction, I had to reduce the scale to quarters of an ounce. One can do so little in a week.

On the fourth day out a startling incident occurred. I was told that the captain wished to speak to me. I found him in his cabin, and he asked me to take a seat.

"This message appears to be for you, Mr. Norwood," he said, handing me a slip of paper. "It came by Marconi this morning."

"*How is the baby?*" I read, and looked up in amazement.

"Where in the world did that come from?" I asked.



"I ASKED HER IN SET TERMS IF SHE THOUGHT SHE HAD BOUGHT THAT BABY.

"We picked it up just now. From the *Ruritania*. She is likely to overtake us to-day. She left New York the day after we did, but she's a faster ship than this. The name was Holland."

The subsequent correspondence between Mrs. Holland and myself, carried on across the miles of desolate sea, deeply impressed the imagination of the ship's company, and has already appeared, in a horribly garbled form, in one of the London papers. For even at sea one cannot escape the enterprising journalist. I learnt that the widow had been caught up in a crowd in New York at a warehouse fire near the quay, and had thus missed the steamer. She had followed post-haste on the next day, and expected to reach Liverpool twenty-four hours before I did. Sure enough, as the afternoon wore on, the four great red funnels of the *Ruritania* appeared above the horizon, and we could see her lights slowly overhauling and leaving us behind during the evening. I took Rebecca up on deck and pointed this out to her, but she seemed uninterested, and refused to have her attention diverted from the back of my hair, which she clutched in exultant handfuls.

I replied to the first message that the baby was in good hands and flourishing in every way, and I would expect to find Mrs. Holland on the landing-stage at Liverpool.

Great is the march of modern science, which can allay the slightest doubts and anxieties in the breast of a banished mother. Among her questions were :—

"*Are you using the Jaeger nightdresses?*"

"*Yes, and the bed-socks.*"

"*Is there any sign of another tooth?*"

"*Regret no sign of tooth, but weight gone up one and three-quarter ounces.*"

The next question came from me :—

"*Baby has only taken half of this evening's bottle. Do you think she is sea-sick?*"

"*No. Often does that when excited. Must be kept quiet before going to sleep. Try little more sugar.*"

The last missive that sped across the trackless sea before the correspondence closed came in about ten o'clock at night.

"*Don't object to small quantity sponge-cake.*"

I had to consult the stewardess about that.

In spite of all my endeavours the baby became famous. The stewardess and I, now banded together in a common cause, had almost to hold the cabin-door by physical force from the crowd of worshipping intruders, and at the end a noble silver mug, which had been telegraphed for from Queenstown, was presented to her from the passengers and crew. Nevertheless, we were able to maintain our privacy for many hours in the day, and Rebecca and I had great times together. We invented a game of thrilling interest, in which she would bravely fling herself into space off the top of the chest of drawers, with close-shut eyes, and never failed to express surprise and delight when she found a pair of arms waiting to save her. And we played at looking for needles in a bundle of hay—by rummaging delightedly in my hair—and trying to pick them out one by one. She had a charming disregard for the laws of gravity, and nothing pleased me more than the way in which she would gravely put things down in space when she had finished with them, and start with surprise when they fell with a thud to the floor. And we spent uproarious hours scratching and patting at the baby in the looking-glass. I am not sure that the best time of all was not the early morning from six to eight. Rebecca was always at the top of her form then, but she was also incomparable in her bath.

And so in the course of time the ship reached Liverpool, and a grateful mother bore her away. She was asleep when I parted from her, with one little fat hand—a mere plump little pad of pink, creased digits—turned palm upward against her chin. Hang it, she was a trump, Rebecca.

I do not like to look back upon the dreary fortnight that I spent at home. I have never in my life been so restless and discontented, so much in need of a rational occupation. I think I knew from the first that there could be only one end to it. I held out as long as I reasonably could, and then packed my portmanteau and went to see Rebecca. It was only the first of a succession of visits.

Mrs. Holland and I are to be married next month, and the only blot upon our happiness is in the fact that I have not yet persuaded her that I love her with a whole heart and for herself alone. As a matter of fact, I do. And it is fortunate, for I am sometimes tempted to believe that, in the peculiar circumstances, I might have been content with a less desirable bride had it been necessary. For there was no other way of entering into full possession of Rebecca.

"On the Road."

A Series of Stories Told by Leading Actors and Actresses on Their Experiences While on Tour.

Illustrated by W. E. Wigfull.

SIR GEORGE ALEXANDER'S EXPERIENCE OF IRVING'S CHRISTMAS PUDDINGS.

WITH the exception of commercial travellers, the members of few professions have travelled more than our leading actors and actresses.

During their travels it goes without saying that each and every artist must, at one time or another, have encountered various interesting experiences—serious, humorous, pathetic, or otherwise—and we have, therefore, collected from a number of the most popular actors and actresses of the day their opinions of the most memorable happenings that have ever befallen them "on the road."

Sir George Alexander.

In a lengthy experience of stage life I can naturally recall not a few happenings which have befallen me at one time and another when "on the road." From the point of view of readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, however, I think that the following tragic occurrence may prove of the greatest general interest.

Nearly twenty-five years ago the late Sir Henry Irving's company—troupe, they termed us — found themselves, during Christmas week, in one of the Western cities of the United States. For some reason or

other Christmas is invariably associated, as far as the commissariat department is concerned, with puddings endowed with that Christian name, and, as he had received a goodly supply of this most indigestible of foods from a friend in England, Irving made the said puddings an excuse to entertain the members of his company to what, I have reason to believe, the manager of the hotel styled a "banquet."

Now, some of us had been staying at this particular hostelry for many days, and, after a dismal experience of the *chef's* ability, it was perhaps only natural that we should entertain grave doubts as to whether the banquet would turn out a success or not. Still, Irving, apparently, had no fears on this matter, and, with that thoroughness which characterized everything he took up, he went to the greatest pains to make satisfactory arrangements for the feast.

Accordingly the coloured *chef* was summoned to his room, and, with a disregard for the truth which would surely have done justice to Ananias at his best, he assured Irving that he was qualified to cook for any or every crowned head in Europe, after which blatant "terminological inexactitude" he submitted a long "menoo" for our host's approval. It certainly promised well.

Irving, however, mindful of previous meals put before him at the establishment, ventured to say that the food he had already eaten in the hotel was not cooked as well as he could wish; but the darky assured him that, as far as this "Irving banquet" was concerned, it would "lick creation"; whereupon he was handed the six large Christmas puddings in their basins.

"Do you know how to serve them?" asked Irving.

"In course I do," replied the *chef*, with such dignity that to question farther seemed an insult.

Christmas Day came. We sat down full of expectations. The dinner was served, and Irving criticized each course as it came.

"Soup—cold; but, thank goodness! there is the pudding." "Fish—ahem!—well—it certainly was not caught yesterday; but, thank Heaven! there is the pudding." "Turkey—tough as leather; beef—probably horse—and fearfully underdone at that. But, by the merciful foresight of Providence and the kindly thought of a friend in England, we have the puddings."

They came—all that was left of them—left of the six of them. The darky *chef* had turned them out of their basins into a large quantity of hot water, and they were served as a kind of sauce in soup-plates!

Miss Ellaline Terriss.

I can think of many interesting touring experiences which have occurred to me at one time and another, but none which amused me more than a certain happening which occurred when I was playing in "The Catch of the Season" in Dublin, not long ago.

On the morning this incident took place I was taking a drive round the Irish capital on a jaunting-car, and, coming to a handsome building and not knowing what it was, never having visited Dublin before, I asked the Jarvey what this interesting landmark represented.

"Ah, shure, miss," he replied, "that's the Bank of Oireland, where the English put the money they take from us."

I said, "Oh, indeed!"

Looking up, I saw the six statues that surrounded the top of the structure, and I said to Pat:—

"Who are those statues of?"

He said: "Begorra! they're the twelve Apostles."

I said: "There are only six."

He said: "That's roight; the others are having lunch with the Lord Liftinant."

Miss Lillah McCarthy.

One touring experience I can recall stands out far more clearly than any other in my mind. It occurred some years ago, when I was acting in a large town in the North of England, where it was a case of "house full" every night. Despite this fact, however, on the third evening I noticed that a seat, almost in the middle of the front row of the stalls, had been empty at each performance, although every other place in the house was occupied.

The following day, happening to meet the proprietor of the theatre, I pointed out the matter to him. "Oh, yes; but I wonder you noticed it," he replied, gravely. "That's 'A 9'—we never sell it, because it's not for sale. You see, it's this way. Nearly ten years ago a lady died suddenly in that seat, and, out of respect to her memory, her husband has paid us so much a year ever since to keep it empty."

"Doesn't he ever use it himself?" I asked.

"Only once a year. On the anniversary of her death he takes 'A 10,' the seat next to it. He was sitting in that seat when she died. He will be there on Saturday night, as that is the anniversary of his wife's death."

The manager spoke truly. On Saturday

night "A 10" was occupied by a tall, broad-shouldered man, with a sad, stern, clean-shaven face, the sternness of which, however, was largely softened by a pair of very soft, very tender, very, very kindly eyes. During the performance I found time to glance more than once at the occupant of "A 10," whose coat and hat, I noticed, were carefully placed on the seat of "A 9." Once or twice it seemed to me that he leant over the arm which separated the two seats, after the manner of one listening either to, or for, something—or someone.

But when I came on the stage in the third act, to my surprise I noticed that "A 10" was bereft of its occupant, and at the close of the piece the manager told me that the man had died suddenly and that his body had been borne home from the theatre.

I shuddered with horror when I heard the news, for it seemed to me that I had lost a friend. But as I walked slowly homeward later on I realized that the incident was really more joyous than horrible, for did it not illustrate the beauty and pathos of a great love, and that a sorrowing soul would now sorrow no longer, for at last it had reached a haven of rest?

Mr. H. B. Irving.

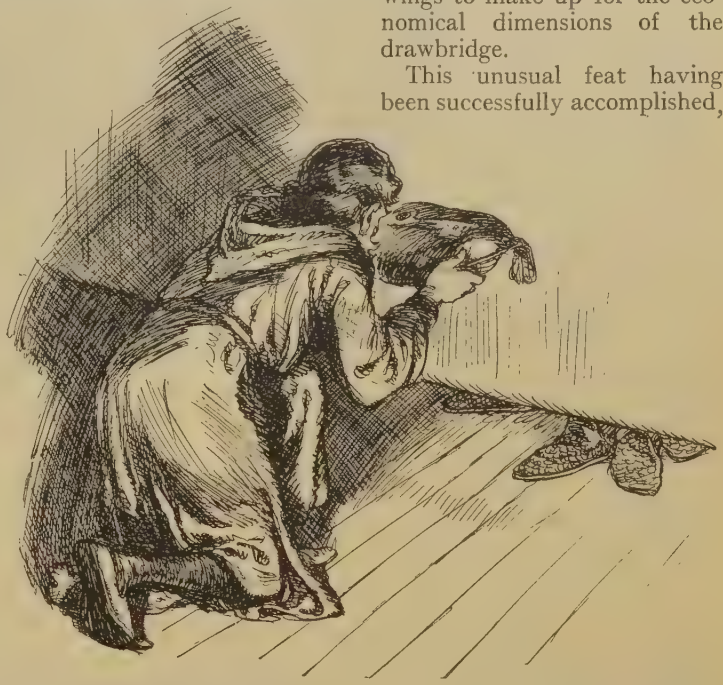
One of the most memorable experiences which ever happened to me when playing out of London occurred some years ago, when the Dramatic Society at Oxford produced "King John." The second act, as all readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE are doubtless well aware, is supposed to take place in front of the walls of Angiers; and, although the production had been most carefully arranged by Mr. Alan Mackinnon, things in this act did not work out as they should have done. Hence the following catastrophes happened—catastrophes which, I may say, I am never likely to forget.

In the first place, at the end of the act, when it had been arranged that the gates of the city should be thrown open, the drawbridge lowered, and the first citizen of Angiers should come forth in solemn and dignified state and present the keys of the city to the Kings of England and France—who were respectively represented by myself and Mr. W. H. Goschen—as luck would have it, we two royal sovereigns became so inextricably caught in each other's armour that we remained locked together, like Siamese twins, until the curtain fell.

Needless to say, this unexpected "amalgamation" on our part caused considerable amusement in the house. But worse was to follow. The drawbridge, after being lowered, refused in the most determined manner to meet the other side of the moat, and, in consequence, "Mahomet" had to go to the mountain—in other words, the solid walls of Angiers had to be pushed forward from the wings to make up for the economical dimensions of the drawbridge.

This unusual feat having been successfully accomplished, amidst loud cheers from the house, the bearer of the keys advanced towards Mr. Goschen and myself, who were still in the most hopeless tangle, and, kneeling before us with as much dignity as he could summon up in the circumstances, offered them to us.

So far, so good. Unfortunately, however, the well-meaning citizen proved himself an exceedingly bad judge of distance, for when the curtain was rung down he still remained kneeling on the stage, cushion in hand, in full view of the audience—with the lowered



"WHEN THE CURTAIN WAS RUNG DOWN HE STILL REMAINED KNEELING ON THE STAGE, CUSHION IN HAND, IN FULL VIEW OF THE AUDIENCE."

curtain as a background! By this time the house was literally doubled up with laughter, and when I recall the uproarious scene of mirth which followed that act, I breathe a deep sigh of relief to think that, at any rate, the Bard of Avon was not there to see his masterpiece burlesqued in this unique manner. Until the end of all time I am never likely to forget the walls of Angiers at Oxford.

Miss Marie Studholme.

It must be unpleasant enough to be mistaken for a lunatic when one actually is slightly deficient in those mental qualities the possession of which entitle us poor mortals to account ourselves "sane," but it is ten thousand times worse to be regarded as a lunatic when one is nothing of the kind. How do I know? Because once when "on the road" I actually experienced the feeling; so that I feel fully entitled to express my opinion on the matter.

It happened in this way. I was playing at Manchester, and as it was Boxing Day I had given instructions to my chauffeur that at any cost I must be at the theatre at least half an hour before the curtain was due to ring up. But the Fates decreed otherwise, for twelve miles from Manchester the car broke down in the most determined manner, and, as I watched my chauffeur indulging in various seemingly ineffective contortions underneath, on looking at my watch I was horrified to find that in three-quarters of an hour I was due at the theatre. I need scarcely say that I felt at my wits' end—literally frantic, in fact—for Christmas audiences are invariably impatient, and that very morning my understudy had fallen ill.

Suddenly, however, just when I was thinking of starting to run, skip, hop, or jump the journey, a ray of hope gleamed on the horizon in the shape of a farmer jogging solemnly along in his cart, and when he came up, as the situation looked desperate, I gleefully accepted his kindly offer to drive me to the station—a distance, by the way, of just over two miles.

We had not gone far when my Good Samaritan pulled up.

"There is a short cut to the station through these fields, missy," he said; "and if you hurry up you should just be in time to catch the next train, which leaves at seven."

Hurry up! Never before or since have I run so fast—and, between ourselves, I hope I never shall, for in my wild career I lost my hat, my hair came undone, I dropped my gloves in a ditch, I half lost a shoe, and goodness knows how many hairpins; but, best of all, I arrived at the station just in time to be bundled into a carriage by a burly porter as the train was steaming out.

The only occupant of the carriage was an austere, not to say acid-looking, elderly lady, who gazed aghast at me as I was literally thrown through the door, and her critical, nervous glance struck me as so irresistibly funny that I burst out laughing, and continued to laugh in staccato tones every time I caught her eye. At first the good lady merely looked at me in surprise, but presently she began to fidget about nervously, and at the next station she edged towards the door, and, calling the guard, said, in audible tones: "There's a dangerous lunatic in this carriage, guard. Kindly have her removed at once, or she will do me some harm."

Of course, when I explained who I was everything came right. But fancy running the risk of having to spend Boxing Day in a lunatic asylum! The very thought sends a cold shudder down my back; but, after all, all's well that ends well.

Miss Zena Dare.

The most memorable incident I can remember when touring? Well, I have been "on the road" so often that I can recall quite a number of experiences—some amusing, and some very much the reverse. Perhaps, however, the following deserves pride of place.

Some years ago I was playing the leading part in pantomime in a certain large north-country town. We had been rehearsing for over a week, and as the hours had been long the strain of the work naturally began to tell on the less robust members of the company, and the stage-door keeper told me one evening as I was leaving that a member of the chorus was dangerously ill, and was living in lodgings close by the theatre.

Now, a considerable theatrical experience has proved to me many a time that rehearsal times are frequently far from joyous periods from the point of view of small-salaried artistes, for, as everyone knows, they are not paid for rehearsing. I therefore asked my father, who was with me, to call and see if he could be of any assistance. On his return I was much distressed to learn that the luckless actor was delirious, and was raving wildly about a certain play he said in his wanderings he had written, and which, if produced successfully, would enable him to marry a member of the company, who was in the chorus of the pantomime, although I did not know this at the time. The sadness of the

story struck me most forcibly; but I saw nothing more of the actor for two years, as his illness proved too severe for him to take his place in the company, although I often used to wonder whether his play had been produced and whether he had been able to satisfy his matrimonial ambitions.

In Glasgow, however, just two years later, I happened to go to a matinée to see the first performance of a new play, which turned out a triumphant success from the point of view of the playwright, and in an almost equal degree also from that of the heroine, whose acting was brilliant. At the fall of the curtain there was a general cry of "Author!" At first he refused to come before the curtain; but finally, after the house had shouted itself hoarse, he appeared, looking very nervous at the unaccustomed ordeal of having to make a speech.

And who do you think the author turned out to be? None other than my erstwhile actor friend, an ex-member of a pantomime chorus. The heroine, too, proved to be the chorus-lady whose ability he had praised so highly in his delirious ramblings.

As a general rule, in life, I fear incidents of this kind do not work out to a happy ending; but this was the exception which proves the rule, for a few days afterwards the budding playwright and the heroine of his first play were married—and I was present at the ceremony. To-day, if I were to mention the name of either the playwright or his wife hundreds of people would surely say, "I never knew that he or she ever occupied so lowly a position on the stage as that of a chorister in pantomime." But they did—as he, she, and I well know.

Miss Ada Reeve.

Beyond all manner of doubt the strangest incident that has ever occurred to me "on the road" took place during a recent tour in South Africa. One evening, just after my arrival at the theatre, I received the following note by messenger from a certain coloured gentleman, who, from the photograph he enclosed, I gathered must be a sort of miniature Lobengula or pocket-Cetewayo.

This is how the letter ran; I have spelt it correctly because his skill in that line was past all human understanding—in fact, it out-euphonized the most euphonic spelling imaginable:—

"Dear shining, twinkling, glittering Star,—Your voice must be even finer than that of the English lark, which the Heaven parson here has often described to me. But his tones are like the roaring of a lion. Lovely white lady, though I shall never meet you, I fear, yet I would like you to know that the heart of a great man—I am, indeed, a great man—is yours. In my own country here I can have as many black wives as I like, and cattle, and glittering beads. But since I have seen you no longer do I care for any of my black wives. Will you give me permission, Queen of beautiful white women, to get together a great Impi, and rid South Africa of every human being, except yourself? Then, Lady of the Shining, Starry Eyes, you and I could become King and Queen of this great Mysterious Land."

The messenger explained that the writer of this note would carry out any verbal message I sent him without delay, though he would prefer to see me in person. I would add that he seemed quite surprised when I told my dresser to say that, so far as I was personally concerned, I was of a particularly peace-loving nature, and that I felt no wish to occupy so exalted a position as that of Queen of South Africa.

And in this way did I avert the terrible slaughter threatened by my unknown and seemingly warlike correspondent, who evidently had quite unique confidence in his powers of dealing out destruction.

Mr. Arthur Roberts.

I wasn't actually playing in the company myself, but the incident happened on the road to a certain actor then unknown, but now quite famous; and as the story is a good one and the experience far more amusing than any touring experience of my own that I can think of, I give it with the best intentions in the world. The play was serious and in blank verse, and my friend, who was only in the early twenties at the time, had to understudy one of the leading parts. Full of ambition, he spent hours daily on learning his lines, and his reward came when one morning he was told that he would have to play the part that very night.

The most important speech he had to give forth was in reply to the query: "What shall I do, good stranger?" or something of the sort; and this is what he ought to have answered in return—kindly note the beautiful blank verse:—

> Nay, speak not, breathe not, hardly dare to move,
> For if thou dost, most surely will they find,
> And slay thee dead—most horrid thing to do!
> Wherefore maintain thy peace in peril of thy life.

The fateful night arrived. My young friend received his cue, and lo and forthwith

he opened his mouth with terrible earnestness to make reply in a manner which, had it worked out as he doubtless thought it would, must inevitably have struck straight home to the heart of every member of the audience.

But unfortunately, like many an actor before and since, when the time arrived for him to declaim the author's words he discovered, to his consternation, that he could not remember them in the faintest degree. For a moment he stood as one rooted to the spot with horror. His eyes began to start out of his head, the roof of his mouth grew parched even as the interior of a lime-kiln, his manly frame began to quiver with fear—in truth he presented a sorry sight. But a remembrance of the words came not, though, of a sudden —Heaven-sent gift!—he recollected their meaning.

A gleam of triumph scintillated in his frank blue eye, and, leaning forward towards the footlights, so that if possible not a single member of the audience should be unfortunate enough to miss his great speech, he said, with terrible earnestness and grim determination :—

"'USH!"

I must apologize for this experience not being my own—I can't help it—and by the same token I wouldn't claim it for worlds. That one word "'Ush" represents one of the greatest tragedies that have ever taken place on the road—that is to say, tragedies from the actor's point of view.

Miss Cecilia Loftus.

Some of my most pleasant memories are of the days I spent playing leading lady with the late Sir Henry Irving, whose kindness I shall never forget. The last night I played with him "on the road" stands out particularly clearly in my memory, and I regard the incident as one of the most interesting I have ever experienced during the course of many tours. Just before the jewel scene, when he was standing in the wings in his Mephistophelian dress, Sir Henry walked up to me and, placing a necklace round my throat, he said, "If only you study as diligently in the future as you have done with me on this tour, your career on the stage should indeed be a triumphant one."

Those who have ever experienced the worries and anxieties consequent on the playing of an important leading part will readily realize how proud I was at these sincere words of encouragement from the greatest actor of the day. I can recall no experience which has occurred to me "on the road" with so much genuine pride as this little incident.

Mr. G. P. Huntley.

My most interesting touring experience? I will tell you—with brutal frankness, coupled with a feeling of deep gratitude that it occurred many years ago.

I was "on the road" at the time with a certain travelling company, which, alas! fell upon bad times, with the result that for weeks the male artistes in this scintillating show thirsted long and often; for, between us, we could not "whip up" enough to soften the heart of even the most reasonably-minded purveyor of liquid refreshment of an alcoholic kind. And a love of the truth compels me to say that, as with a horse, so with an actor—you can lead him to water, but it does not necessarily follow that you can make him drink it.

But this is beside the question. One lucky day Fortune smiled upon our company once more, for the villain managed to induce some half-witted individual to lend him a whole ten shillings—and all at the same time—whereupon we thirsty actors hied ourselves to the nearest house of call which vended liquid and stimulating refreshment.

There all went well until the juvenile lead, who had an unusually large mouth, reminiscent in many respects of the main entrance to a circus tent, was asked what particular form of poison he felt disposed to partake of.

"Thank you very much, old friend," he replied, glibly. "I'll have a mouthful of whisky."

"No, you won't, my boy," came the reply, still more glibly, as his host gazed first of all at his half-sovereign and then at his guest's portentously capacious jaws; "you'll have just the same as the others."

Mr. George Graves.

Have any interesting experiences occurred to me when on the road? In truth there have; and sometimes even now I lie awake in the middle of the night and shudder at the very remembrance of many a tragic occurrence which has befallen me in provincial climes.

One incident in particular is engraven deep on my memory. Many summers ago, with two other uncaptured criminals, I tried my hand at "busking"—*i.e.*, "Ye Gay Seaside Warblers or Pierrots" (with the accent on the latter syllable). We bought lavender-coloured flannels and mysterious masks, and hied ourselves to a popular watering-place

in the Isle of Wight—that is to say, a watering-place which is popular in the season; but, as events turned out, we arrived on the scene precisely two months before the season started. But no matter—we thought that the combination of lavender-coloured flannel summer suits—you know the species of garment; one shower and the suit is spoilt—and mysterious masks must inevitably create something like a riot in this seemingly sleepy little seaside resort.

"PLEASE, MR. MUSICIAN, COULD YOU PLAY 'TA-RA-RA BOOM-DE-AY'?"

After awaking the local piano-shop keeper prematurely out of his winter trance (by two months), we persuaded him to let us have a last season's "boarding-house horror" on loan at a modest stipend, and, having deftly extracted the cigarette ends out of its interior, the instrument was removed by hefty and adipose fishermen to the pier head. We then visited the local printer, who had closed his shop and was in the back parlour making a kite for his youngest child. We next proceeded to induce the tradespeople to permit us to put our bills up in semi-fish-cum-butcher-cum-sweetstuff-confectionery-and-tobacco shops, and also one in the local barber's establishment, whereupon the latter became so excited at the busy air his shop had assumed that he severely cut the chin of the only client who had visited him for weeks.

We opened on Saturday night. Why on Saturday night? Because we thought it would be pay-night. Before making our appearance on the pier we bribed a number of semi-alcoholic fishermen to come and see the show and spread the glad news of our arrival among their friends. The curtain was rung up. The audience consisted of a hospital nurse in charge of an invalid-chair with an old lady inside it.

Shades of "house full" at Drury Lane and elsewhere! Visions of five-pound notes—and legacies! We put the tenor on at once; I recited; our pianist played a sonata with feeling, whereupon I went round to *the audience* with the plate.

She coughed violently, adjusted her ear-trumpet, told the nurse to give us twopence, and gurgled out, "Please, Mr. Musician, could you play 'Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay'?"

The rain came down in sheets. We closed the show, after assisting the audience out in her bath-chair; I put the twopence in my waistcoat-pocket and buttoned up my coat, lest the crowd should repent of her lavish generosity—and London saw us next day.

And in this way do budding actors amass fortunes on the road.

FOR THE HONOUR OF THE SCHOOL.

By CLAUDE E. BENSON.

Illustrated by C. H. Taffs.

Guard, guard it well, where Sidney fell,
The poet-soldier's grave;
Thy life shall roll, O royal soul,
Through other hearts as brave.
While thought to wisdom wins the gay,
While strength upholds the free,
Are we the sons of yesterday
Or heirs of thine and thee?

AS the chorus rang out I felt an emotion of exhilaration, or rather of exaltation, stir within me. It was the first time I had had the good fortune to attend a concert of the School on the Hill. I had met Harrovians time and again during the last ten years. It would be invidious to say that there were no men so loyal to their old school, but certainly none more loyal. Again, *Civis Hergensis sum*—which, being interpreted, may be freely rendered, "I say, were you at Harrow? So was I"—was an Open Sesame to cordiality between perfect strangers. These characteristics, however, are common, *mutatis mutandis*, to Eton, Winchester, Rugby, and others. I had generally, however, noted a certain open self-assurance of bearing, which differed more in kind than in degree from the polish of Eton or the stateliness of Winchester, and which was by no means displeasing.

In the school concert I had found its origin, as I believed, and from that moment only the school songs on the programme interested me. The incidental instrumental concertos and solos were well enough executed, but they were relatively but dry bones, not the expression of the life of some great power. And when we came to the great old song "Forty Years On," a further revelation lightened on me. Pemberton, my friend beside me, who had left Harrow in the late 'eighties, seemed to cast aside twenty years as a garment and stood up with the freshness and vigour of youth upon him, despite the lines on his face and the grey streaks in his hair. And, as I looked round the long lines of Old Boys, pouring out their hearts in lusty song, I realized that for a few brief minutes they were boys again, the children of one great mother, as well as the heirs of years on years of noble traditions.

Pemberton looked at me somewhat quizzically as we struggled down the Speech-Room steps.

"I told you it would be an experience," he said.

"It was, indeed!" I replied, heartily. "I feel as if something had happened, and——"

Further discussion was interrupted by a jovial and reverend gentleman of dignified aspect smiting Pemberton upon the shoulder, and proclaiming to all within earshot:—

"Halloa! It's old Clumps. How are you, Clumps?"

To which Pemberton replied, as cordially, "Halloa! Hedgehog," and from that moment till the train emptied itself at Marylebone Station I was out of it.

Pemberton carried me off to dinner at his club. We had been at Merton together in the same year, on the same landing, and the best of good friends, and, though we had not exchanged word or line for a decade, we had taken up the friendship again just where it left off, as is the fashion of men—but not of women.

"FROM THAT MOMENT TILL THE TRAIN EMPTIED ITSELF AT MARYLEBONE STATION I WAS OUT OF IT."

"Well," I said, as soon as we were settled in a taxi, "tell us all about yourself. Where have you been all this time, and what have you been doing, and what going to do?"

"Well," he replied, "I have not been disbarred yet. I have even taken silk. When I am not practising in town, I am on circuit; when I am not on circuit, I am on the mountains; and on Monday, the day after to-morrow, I am off to the North for Easter. Your turn."

"I have been engaged in base commercial enterprise in China, varied by excursions to Japan and Amoy—which, by the way, is in China. I arrived home yesterday in this detestable acreage of bricks and mortar; tried to walk out of it this morning; some kindly Olympian piloted me to the King's Head, where I cannoned into you, *et voilà tout!*"

"Yes; but what are you going to do?"

"Don't know and don't care, so long as it is out of London.

I am as a weed
Torn from the rock, on ocean's foam to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep or tempest's breath prevail."

Pemberton threw up his eyes in mock despair.

"Do you mean to say," he demanded, "that you haven't been cured of your everlasting quoting? I say, Amoy is a mountainous place, is it not?"

"It is."

"Are you fond of climbing?"

"To me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture,"

I replied, mischievously, being ignorant, in my innocence, that in Britain the verb "to climb" had become specialized to mean the ascent of such precipices that the normal person only attempts in nightmares, and that

my companion had developed into one of those madmen who risk life and limb in attempts to climb places where man was never intended to set foot.

"Hooray!" exclaimed Pemberton. "Then you're booked for Borderdale this Easter. Bouverie wired me this morning that he has a touch of flu, and is crocked. Consequently his bed is vacant, and I was looking for another man. You come with me, and I think I can promise you another experience."

"If it's like this afternoon's," I answered, warmly, "consider me booked."

Pemberton smiled.

"It is hardly of the same kind," he said.

"So I judged. But what kind is it?"

"Humph! Damp, discomfort, dirt, danger, splendid exercise, grand scenery, and the best of good fellowship."

I replied:—

> "Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
> 'Tis hard to reconcile.

Nevertheless I will go with thee."

After dinner we adjourned to the strangers' billiard-room, which fortunately we had to ourselves—fortunately, for glimpses of notes like the catch of a song kept coming over me, elusive recollections of the airs that I had heard that afternoon, but which I could not lay hold of. Consequently Pemberton, who knew them all by heart, words and music, was in constant requisition, to the great delight of myself and, I hope, to the edification of the marker.

"PEMBERTON CHALKED HIS CUE AND RAN OUT WITH A THIRTY-SEVEN BREAK UNFINISHED."

"It's a very odd thing," I said, after a while, "that you have steadily avoided the song that took my fancy most—and, of course, I can't for the life of me remember what it is."

By way of reply Pemberton said "Oh!" chalked his cue, and ran out with a thirty-seven break unfinished. Then, turning to me, he asked me what I had been saying. I repeated the purport of my words.

"Well," he asked, "but what was it? I mean, what was it about? Can't you give me a lead?"

I thought a moment. "Some of the senior boys said something during the chorus. Let me see. Oh! I recollect now——"

But Pemberton interrupted me by softly humming a few bars. "Here, sir," he ended, "I'm not quite certain that, taken all round, it is not my favourite, always excepting 'Forty Years On.' Certainly your preference is in distinguished company. When King Edward VII., of blessed memory, came to the Hill that was the song that most attracted Her Majesty Queen Alexandra. To descend, however, to matters practical for a moment. How about your kit?"

After some cross-questioning it was passed as adequate, except as to the feet. This necessitated a visit to South Molton Street on Monday morning for the purchase of boots—fearsome constructions of steel and hide—and the postponement of our start. It seemed, however, that the delay was not without its compensations. Pemberton forthwith arranged that the heavy baggage (two Gladstones) should be sent ahead, whilst we took the afternoon train to Eskwater, slept the night there, and walked over to Borderdale End next day, rucksack (another purchase) on back, by way of a training grind. Pemberton's two companions, Martin and Kempson, Harrovians both, we should find at Borderdale End. To my inquiry why we should not accompany our luggage it was revealed to me that Borderdale was one of the few delectable places left in England, twelve miles from anywhere, only reasonably accessible from one side, to reach which there was only one decent train from London, and that we had missed.

We were up betimes the next morning, for the walk from Eskwater to Borderdale, I learned, was twenty long miles, including a rough pass over two thousand feet high and a very home of blizzards. We left the hotel, took two turns through the twisting streets of the quaint little town, and in a moment I found myself in Eden. It was one of those gracious days that tell of winter past and summer to come. On all sides grace and beauty were budding into life. The spring was spring indeed, the sky of the old, immemorial blue; the air was musical with warblings and fragrant with the scent of blossoms.

"'For, lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come,'" I quoted, unreproved. Pemberton, in fact, smiled responsively, and then laughed lightly with the pure joy of living. A few hundred yards brought us to the main road, shut in by trees on both sides, and affording to the left occasional peeps of what seemed to be a sheet of water; then a short ascent, and all at once I stopped, speechless, well-nigh breathless with delighted surprise.

Immediately below me was Eskwater, stretching out on the left between its wooded shores an unruffled mirror of unsullied azure, and on the right, broadening toward the head of the lake, all a-dance with ripples and a-sparkle with sunbeams, in laughing contrast to the rugged barrier of rock and bracken that closed it in. And above all, sweeping round to the north in a magnificent confusion of broken outline, a most graceful cirque of snow-clad peaks, here shading off into slopes of tender green, there harsh with black crags and savage precipices.

We strode on, stepping from crystal step to crystal step of the bright air, now skirting some rocky bluff, now by the side of some melodious stream of most transparent clearness, overarched by trees, with ever-shifting, ever-changing enframed panoramas of loveliness. Pemberton's enthusiasm was kindled by my exhilaration. He talked incessantly. He knew every peak, every stone, every stream. Now and again he would break into song, and, always with a smile at me, into one of those songs that had so attracted me at the school concert.

After a while the scenery became wilder, and soon I found myself in a narrow valley, walled in by noble mountains. Then followed an ankle-twisting wade across a flooded strath, intersected with runnels innumerable, a back-breaking grind up what the Ordnance Surveyors are facetiously pleased to call a pony-track, an almost vertical shute of loose and exceedingly sharp-edged stones, and then one step from spring into winter.

To the right the ground fell away, affording distant glimpses of inviting valleys; on the left tier succeeded tier of forbidding cliffs, and before and around was snow, nothing

but snow. The air was full of it, though the sky was clear, for a biting gale caught up the frozen particles and drove them fiercely before it, stinging our hands and faces like hard sand. Even Pemberton stopped talking.

Doggedly, with bent heads and shut mouths, we fought our way on, now ascending, now descending, till almost suddenly there expanded before us, enframed in a stupendous setting of crags, another panorama of snowy peaks. A few minutes more and a green glen opened at our very feet.

"Borderdale at last!" exclaimed Pemberton. "Our Mecca lies beyond that shoulder," pointing to the projecting spur of a mountain which seemed to cut the valley in half; "and our track is along the base of that scree. Be a bit careful. It's all right as a rule, but it looks rather heavily iced. Come on."

Careful I was, and right glad was I of my newly-purchased mountain-boots, and gladder still of a steadying hand from Pemberton. At length we passed once more from winter to spring, and my companion began to descant on the glories of the vertical crags overhead. I looked at them with dubious eye.

"I STOPPED, SPEECHLESS, WELL-NIGH BREATHLESS WITH DELIGHTED SURPRISE."

"Like Nicodemus Dodge in 'A Tramp Abroad,' I consider them kind of rocks dangersome."

Pemberton laughed.

"There is a real and ever-present element of danger in climbing, and to recognize this is to reduce the risk of accident to a minimum. There are, of course, some men—brilliant cragsmen, too, after a fashion—who ought never to be allowed on any mountain; but, as the great O. G. writes, let us not seek to inoculate them with any other sport, for the

effect will be to render that sport dangerous. Now, there is one——"

He stopped himself, and his brow clouded.

"Anyhow, I hope he won't be here this Easter. If he is, keep clear of him."

He strode on in moody silence to the foot of the pass, and thence, through a labyrinth of stone walls, to the local hotel. On the wall of the yard were seated two gentlemen, very much at their ease, with pipes in their mouths and slippers on their feet, who hailed us with acclamation.

I was formally introduced and characteristically made to feel at my ease at once; accepted as a comrade-in-arms without question.

"He wasn't at Harrow," explained Pemberton, "but he's a Harrow enthusiast. I took him to the school concert on Saturday, and he's been cracked on the songs ever since."

"That shows you to be a musician of the first water, sir," said Kempson, the taller of the two, gravely.

"No," I replied. "I did not quite mean that, of course. They are pretty, and have a rare lilt, but there is something——" I hesitated.

"You mean," explained Martin, "that they catch and express the atmosphere of the Hill?"

"Exactly."

"Anybody else here?" inquired Pemberton.

"Yes, that sweep, Burnham," said Kempson. "I wonder for which of my many sins I am condemned to have my holidays spoiled by his nauseous presence?"

Pemberton gave an exclamation of disgust.

"The man I was speaking of just now," he explained to me; then to the others, "Is he in the hotel now?"

"No. I hear he went off this morning with another ass to create a Zweieselgrat on Ash Crag, D. Gully."

Pemberton's face darkened.

"A novice with him, I suppose?"

"Yes."

Pemberton kicked the ground savagely.

"I don't care *that*," he said, snapping his fingers, "whether he breaks his own worthless neck or not—but to take a novice! It is too bad. I wish I had been here this morning. I would not have allowed it."

"You would have had your work cut out, old man——" began Martin.

"I—would—not—have—allowed—it," returned Pemberton, emphasizing each word. "Anyhow, I'll go and see that we don't have our meals spoiled by his contagion."

He turned as he spoke and walked into the hotel, leaving me a little amused and a little uncomfortable.

"I see the gentleman is not in Pemberton's books," I remarked.

"Nor in anyone else's," said Kempson. "I mistook him for a decent chap at first, but afterwards I found him to be," checking off the points on his finger-tips, "selfish, purse-proud, conceited, jealous, insolent, and vindictive."

"A pleasant combination."

"In anyone, yes," assented Kempson, "but incomprehensible in a man who really loves the mountains."

"I don't think he does," interposed Martin; "it's only his insane desire for notoriety and to be top dog. He is a strong and daring climber——"

"But a bad and dangerous mountaineer," insisted Kempson. "He practises competitive climbing, which is bad enough, and encourages others to do so, which is wicked. That's why I call him vindictive."

There seemed a flaw in the connection. I looked a question. Kempson understood and laughed.

"I mean," he explained, "that last year in North Wales old Pemberton remonstrated with him about this. Burnham waxed loud and insolent, but was promptly sat on by the entire smoking-room, and retired in shame and confusion of face. And—would you believe it?—the vindictive brute had his knife into Pemberton and tried his best to injure him professionally and socially."

"I should not think that a safe game."

"You have not seen Pemberton for some time?" inquired Martin. I nodded. "Well, he has quieted down a lot—is just as mild as he used to be fiery. He does not believe in retaliation. All the same, it is natural that he should dislike being associated with Burnham. Nevertheless, I believe he would have tried to stop him this morning. By the way, do you know what made him late?"

I explained it was the purchase of my boots.

"Ha!" commented Kempson, quizzically; "then but for your boots Burnham might not have gone to Ash Crag. Behold possibilities! Now, if I had a pair of boots that were responsible directly or indirectly for giving Burnham a toss, I'd have 'em framed."

"I should not say that," interposed Martin, seriously. "D. Gully is bad enough at any time—the rottenest shop in the district; but now, after these alternate thaws and frosts——"

The pause was eloquent. At that moment

Pemberton came out and carried me off to my room for change and clean down. We shared the bedroom, and, I understood, were lucky in that.

My friend was strangely silent. He was not depressed exactly, but grave, and had an air of anxiety and expectancy, which after a while began to make me feel almost nervous.

He rallied his spirits as we descended the stairs, and shouted to Kempson and Martin to come and have a sing-song in my honour in the drawing-room.

Dusk was beginning to fall, but there was light enough by the window to read the words in the well-worn volume of Harrow songs that was handed to me. The others required neither words nor music.

Pemberton at the piano ran over the prelude of the tune that had attracted me, whilst the others stood by, "prepared to shout," as they said. Then the song commenced :—

"I HAVE SOME RECOLLECTION OF A MAD DRIVE AT HEADLONG SPEED ALONG A NARROW ROAD."

Like an ancient river flowing
From the mountain to the sea——

"Go on, Pemberton, man. What's up?"

Pemberton had ceased playing, and was sitting with upraised finger.

"Listen!" he said, throwing open the window.

Far away down the road we could hear a faint, regular rattle, which grew momently more distinct and resolved itself into the rhythmical beat of galloping hoofs.

"I knew it," said Pemberton, and slipped out of the room.

We looked at each other inquiringly.

"I believe," explained Martin, "that he thinks there has been an accident. Ash Crag seems to have got on his nerves. I wonder—"

He did not finish his sentence. Round a bend in the road came a horse and trap, driven at furious speed. Pemberton ran to meet it. There was a quick interchange of words and he turned towards us and shouted—

"A smash. Hurry up!"

The next moment I was alone in the room. I followed the two at speed.

"You coming?" asked Martin. I nodded. "Good man! Jump into your boots."

Whilst I was settling my laces, and bungling in my haste, I heard the others conversing from room to room.

"You know," shouted Kempson, through his door, "we can't expect Pemberton to come. It's not fair or reasonable that he should risk his life for a blackguard who has insulted and injured him."

"Of course not. We shall manage somehow, I don't doubt."

In the hall we found Pemberton. He was pulling on his left boot and whistling softly to himself—the tune of the interrupted song.

"I say," began both the others, disconnectedly. "It's perfectly absurd. You are not to come. Now, don't be quixotic."

Pemberton looked up at them and changed his whistling into song:—

> So to-day! And, oh, if ever
> Duty's voice is sounding clear,
> Bidding men to brave endeavour,
> Be our answer, "We are here!"
> Come what will,
> Good or ill,
> We will answer, "We are here!"

For a moment the other two Harrovians stood to attention.

"Here, sir! Here, sir! Here, sir! Here sir!" they answered, alternately, and then followed Pemberton at a run.

Already two stretchers and first-aid appliances had been packed in the trap in a businesslike way by the landlord. Martin had taken the reins, the owner of the cart, an aged farmer, having given up his seat, as he thought a "lish young chap might be of more use," and away we sped.

I have some recollection of a mad drive at headlong speed along a narrow road that gleamed, white and ghostlike, in the gathering dusk, with a dark lake on one side overhung by sombre precipices, and on the other green spurs and wild valleys, till we tore into a little village with a green in the centre.

A group of men were awaiting us. Them Pemberton hurriedly questioned, and ascertained the scene of the accident. Meantime, four of the men had started with the stretchers.

"Doctor's aheed aready," one of them informed us.

We passed at a sharp trot across a field-path, under some trees, across a meadow, then, skirting a coppice, we found ourselves at the foot of a long slope of loose stones that shifted and yielded at every step, over which towered gigantic bastions of black, rifted crags.

"Steady up these screes," said Pemberton to Martin, who was disposed to hurry. "We may need all our breath at the finish. More haste, worse speed."

Steadily we toiled upwards, until at length we entered a gigantic fissure roofed by an enormous boulder, something like one of those colossal gateways on the Nile, but far more stupendous and magnificent. Under some overhanging crags on the left retaining wall were a small group of men. We halted, and Pemberton swiftly commenced to uncoil a length of rope he had slung over his shoulders.

"Come in under shelter," called one of the men, the doctor. "There are a lot of stones falling."

As if to confirm his words, something came whistling out of the blackness overhead and splintered itself on the screes at my feet.

"Pleasant!" grumbled Pemberton. "Come up under the chockstone."

A short scramble took us under the shelter of the great boulder. There Pemberton commenced to tie on the rope. There was an outbreak of expostulation from the other two. Pemberton turned to them.

"Now, my dear fellows, who always leads?"

"But, look here, old man, it's simply suicidal——"

"All the more reason I should go. I'm not married; both of you are. Besides, they are only at the top of this pitch. Halloa!" he shouted. "Burnham! Are you there?"

There was a faint answering call. Pemberton smiled.

"That's all right," he said. "They're alive, anyhow."

As he spoke he turned his face to the left wall of the gully. I watched him with

breathless anxiety and admiration. That such rocks were scalable I had, till then, no conception. Yet Pemberton worked his way up them—slowly, it is true, but with precision and certainty, seemingly with ease. I spoke to Martin.

"Difficult? Yes," he replied. "It's quite stiff enough for me in daylight, and how he gets up in this darkness I can't think. Halloa!" he called. "How is it going? Have you reached the traverse yet?"

"Just," came a voice from the gloom.

"Shall I come up to you?"

"No. It would waste time. I can manage all right."

Martin turned to me and said "Hush!" and gazed anxiously upwards.

I could not understand him at once. Pemberton was only about twenty feet up, and surely, I thought, we could break his fall if he lost his hold. Gradually, however, I saw him working outwards and diagonally upwards across a wide slab of light-coloured rock. I recognized then that, in case of a slip, he would fall outside and past us, and every step he took increased the depth beneath him.

At length he came to a stop, and shouted to look out for stones, as he could not wait to be careful. Then he gradually drew himself out of sight, whilst a shower of loose rock dashed past us and down the gully-bed.

Immediately afterwards came a tug at the rope. Martin expostulated, but was sternly told to hurry up and not waste time.

There was a minute's silence, and then, amid a cascade of stones, a dark form came swinging over the edge of the great boulder. Immediately Kempson worked his way out along a broad ledge, and, as the body came to his level, tenderly guided it back till Martin could reach it and draw it into the shelter of the cave. At the same time I found the doctor by my side.

It was the man Burnham. He was very white and evidently suffering great pain. He spoke quickly and excitedly, whilst Martin hastily unknotted the rope round his waist.

"It's nothing," he said, setting his teeth. "My leg's broken, and I fancy a rib or two." Then he caught sight of Martin, and flushed. "You!" he continued, harshly. "What are you doing here? You call Pemberton your friend, and you let him go up there. It is raining stones. He has been hit once already. It is terrible. Pemberton—Pemberton, who has saved my life, whom I have so wronged."

He began to cry weakly. Martin turned very white and for a moment was silent. Then, with a fierce gesture, he said to Kempson:—

"I believe that was why he would not let me follow up."

Kempson shook his head in vexed assent and continued gazing upwards. Soon Burnham's companion was safely lowered. He was unconscious, but comparatively uninjured. Again we waited.

"I ought to have insisted on going," muttered Martin. "His hands must be quite worn out with the strain."

"I'm not afraid of his grip," replied Kempson. "Moreover, there's a first-class belay there, and all he had to do was to ease them down round it. That," as another fragment came whizzing by, "is what I fear. Ah! here he comes."

We could now discern Pemberton's form outlined darkly against the light slab. We held our breath as he moved steadily down.

"Once under the shelter of the chock-stone——" began Martin.

There was a quick, dark shadow on the pale slab, a crash, a shower of splinters, and a great rock bounded down the gully and out on to the scree. And with the rock fell Pemberton.

By the time we had reached him the shepherds below had lifted him and carried him to the shelter of the overhanging crags, and propped him against the wall of the gully. The doctor bent over him for a moment. It needed not the sad conviction of the shake of his head to tell us the awful truth. The whole of the left side was dreadfully crushed and mutilated, and there was that in his face——

And then Pemberton opened his eyes and smiled.

I bent over him.

"I am in no pain," he whispered; "but my time is very short. Good-bye. Tell the others I want to say good-bye."

I gave his message, choking. Kempson and Martin knelt beside him—one white and silent, the other with manly tears running down his bronzed cheek.

"Is there anything we can do?" asked Martin.

Pemberton shook his head feebly. Then he smiled again.

"AND WITH THE ROCK FELL PEMBERTON."

"Yes. Sing me one of the old songs—the songs of the dear old Hill. That one we were singing——"

His voice failed and his head drooped for a moment.

Then he raised it.

"You will, won't you?"

It was a strange scene. The dying man, with the grey twilight on his grey face, and his friends on their knees, struggling with their grief to fulfil his last behest. Gradually their voices grew stronger. They had reached the third verse:—

One by one—and as they name us
Forth we pass from boyhood's rule
Sworn to be renowned and famous
For the honour of the school;
True as steel
In our zeal
For the honour of the school.

A sudden, glad light of triumphant recognition shone on Pemberton's face. He lifted his uninjured hand to his forehead.

"Here, sir!" he said, and his voice was quite strong. Then the arm fell back like lead.

Another Harrovian had answered the call of his Master.

Some Hints on Dress.

For the Use of Our Great Men.

By W. NORTH WHITE, Editor of "London Fashions."

PROUD as Great Britain is of her great Britons, in one most important particular how short many fall of greatness! The man may have a strong character, a fine talent, an active mind, an untiring industry, which mark him out (to those who know him) as an uncommon individual, and yet he will appear in public a person of the most commonplace description. This is wrong. It is sad to contemplate. It shows a deterioration from the habits of the great men of the past. Clothes, whatever Carlyle had to say on the subject, are an outward sign of the inward grace. No man is less great because he pays sedulous attention to his apparel. The great statesmen of the past were very particular as to the curl of their wigs, the folds of their neckcloths, the fit of their coats, and the beauty of their waistcoats. Pepys was an admirable Secretary of the Navy, and yet he did not regard two hours spent upon his toilet as thrown away. Such men as Canning, Peel, Disraeli, and Pitt regarded dress as of the first importance; and why, indeed, should greatness disdain the fashions? Why should genius patronize ready-made garments? Why should a successful author wear an obsolete coat and baggy trousers, any more than a successful member of the Stock Exchange?

MEN WHO MIGHT LEAD THE FASHIONS.
MR. KEIR HARDIE AND MR. W. T. STEAD.

No; the public enjoys certain rights, or should enjoy them, over its public men, and one of its first considerations should be to demand that they be properly dressed. Now, there is only one way to be properly dressed, and that is *à la mode*.

Fashion has been called a tyrant—a despot; but, of course, it is nothing of the kind. It is a bland and benevolent constitutional monarch, merely signing wise laws made by the Sartorial Parliament for the regulation in cut, discrimination in colour and texture, and the proper clothing of the people. To conform to these laws should be the duty of every good citizen according to his station in life.

Now, our public men ought to set an example. Even a Labour Member of Parliament should recognize his duty in this respect.

Why, for instance, should Mr. Keir Hardie claim any exemption? This eminent spokesman of Socialistic doctrine boasts a straight, compact figure, which would carry off the latest style in morning coat or a frock-overcoat with a flowing skirt to advantage. Why should he fancy that by having his clothes cut in the fashion he would lose caste with his constituents?

Think of the enormous capital, think of the thousands—yea, even the hundreds of thousands—of persons connected with the tailoring institutions of this country who are benefited by a change of fashions in dress. More than half of these people would be thrown out of

THE RIGHT HON. JOHN BURNS, M.P., STUDIES THE FASHION-PLATES—THE RESULT.

Board would present if he carefully studied the current fashion-plates, and allowed himself to be garbed in as up-to-date a fashion as Mr. Justice Darling, Mr. F. E. Smith, or Sir Gilbert Parker.

How well we all remember the outcry that was raised against Mr. Darling's elevation to the Bench because he insisted upon attiring himself *à la mode*, especially the attacks directed against his double collar, which was considered too youthful and undignified. The brilliant Liverpool member was also jeered at as a "dude," because, forsooth, he wore a high collar and paid frequent visits to his tailor; but he has work to-morrow if every man were free to dress as he chose, and in as old garments as he pleased. No man dresses for himself, but for the good of the community; and I trust Mr. W. T. Stead will also become converted to this doctrine.

The Right Hon. John Burns, M.P., has no more right to go about in an old reefer or pea-jacket than a clergyman has to wear tweeds in the pulpit. Think of how imposing a figure the President of the Local Government succeeded in living that prejudice down.

Again, my respect for Mr. Will Crooks, M.P., would make me urge it upon him to have his garments cut in the latest style. His supporters would soon recognize that in his glossy silk hat, white-topped patent-leather boots, and immaculate waistcoat, and grey or even white gloves, he was merely doing his duty in the station of life to which it had pleased Providence to call him.

It may be urged that the physical proportions of Mr. John Redmond or Lord Haldane would not lend themselves to distinction in dress; but this theory is dubious. Let me essay the experiment. Let them put themselves wholly in the hands of their tailor, their hatter, their haberdasher, and their bootmaker, and note the result.

MR. JOHN REDMOND AND MR. WILL CROOKS AS THEY MIGHT APPEAR IN HYDE PARK.

A FRIENDLY HINT TO MR. BALFOUR.

The most vulnerable point in Mr. Balfour's attire is not so much the kind of garments as it is the ill-fittingness and bagginess; while, of course, the species of collar he affects precludes any idea of smartness. For him I recommend a pleasing, even a jaunty, juvenility of attire, which would win him increased homage and mask his advancing years. A

THE VERY THING FOR MR. BIRRELL.

different style would apply to Mr. Birrell, upon whose form a smart "Chesterfield" would sit with easy grace.

It is gratifying to perceive that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not above the fashion; but in order that both he and his friends may see how much farther the road is to travel to sartorial perfection, I offer the accompanying plates.

There are others amongst our newer school of statesmen who are not so much careless of dress as given over to a studied antiquity. I notice with some concern that Mr. Winston Churchill indulges more and more in a species of contempt for the fashions, as if there were one sort of attire for Parliamentary eminence and another for private mediocrity. His hats are made from a special block (designed by himself), his collars are cut from a secret pattern. Why? What form of egotism can be more distressing than that which overrides all vested interests? Why should Mr. Churchill's judgment in matters of hats and collars be superior to that of experts who have made of it a lifelong study, and who move along definite lines of evolution? It is not one man's business to prescribe the fashions. It is all a law arising out of current conditions and current standards of taste.

Having grown weary of Mr. Burns's reefer, perhaps the Home Secretary will design himself a brand-new tunic, and perhaps a pair of pantaloons, in the hope thereby of establishing his complete independence. I would earnestly entreat him to pause, remember what he owes to the community, and pay an immediate visit to Savile Row.

Then besides statesmen there are careless geniuses in other callings, and also sartorial egoists like Mr. Bernard Shaw. How much more splendid and imposing a figure Mr. Shaw would offer to the gaze of his contemporaries if he generously offered his present garments to a church bazaar and donned the conventional garb of a polished English gentleman! I believe Mr. Shaw has never worn evening-dress in his life. Is it too late for repentance? I make him a present of the plate on the next page, which will perhaps impart some idea of his sartorial possibilities.

Then there is Mr. J. M. Barrie, who is, in his way, an even greater sinner. For the gifted author of "The Little Minister" is frankly careless about clothes. He is not in the least eccentric, if by eccentricity is meant a striking deviation from the normal. But the wealthiest living author should bear continually upon his person tangible evidences of the esteem in which he is held in the English-speaking world, of the position in letters to which his countrymen have promoted him. Radiant though he might be in purple, and glorious in fine linen, he merely goes about in a faded blue-serge suit of the fashion of 1880 and an unfashionable bowler hat. Is this the dignity of literature? Is this a proper return for the favours we have heaped upon him? No, no; I do not think Mr. Barrie looks at matters in their deeper significance, or he would not flout us thus. He would become as distinguished in his apparel as Sir Arthur Pinero.

LORD HALDANE AND MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL ARE EARNESTLY INVITED TO ADOPT SOMETHING IN THIS STYLE.

WHAT THE WORLD LOSES—MR. BERNARD SHAW NEVER WEARS A DRESS SUIT.

collar from Mr. Lewis Harcourt, and a pair of boots from Mr. Austen Chamberlain, and then take a walk down Piccadilly and carefully note the effect. It would repay him; it would repay us all.

Good dressing, like good speaking—or, indeed, any art—is not to be attained on the instant. It must be lovingly cultivated, and the result will always justify the pains spent upon its attainment.

What the gentlemen

But of Mr. Hall Caine I hardly dare trust myself to speak. He strives after the picturesque, as being more consistent with his genius. But what a greater effect would be obtained by the force of contrast between the magnificent modern raiment of the man and the volcanic mediævalism of his talent. Let him but borrow a coat from Earl Winterton, and a pair of splendid striped trousers from Sir George Alexander, and a I have named lack is the conviction of their utter misguidedness and the boon they would confer upon their fellow-countrymen by reforming their careless ways. Nature has given them genius, fashion will give them charm. The combination of a well-dressed body and a well-furnished mind is irresistible. Moreover, the women of England demand it, and, if they have a particle of gallantry in their disposition, our public men will eventually make themselves as attractive to the fair sex as they will be obliged to do when the fair sex has a vote.

"THE DIGNITY OF LITERATURE"—MR. J. M. BARRIE.

AN APOTHEOSIS—MR. HALL CAINE.

And whilst I write in the cause of fashion I am tempted to ruminate. After all, in spite of Carlyle's philosophy of clothes, could any man to-day tell another man's character by the size of his boots? Would Mr. John Burns be less Mr. John Burns if he wore fashionable spats or Mr. Harcourt be more masterful if he wore a *négligé* flannel collar?

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WHICH?

By AUSTIN PHILIPS.

Illustrated by Sydney Seymour Lucas.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

"MR. TRISCOTT *will remember that on the night of May 21st, fifteen months ago, his business premises were set on fire by some person unknown. If Mr. Triscott will see the writer of this letter at noon to-morrow, there may still be time to save someone of whom Mr. Triscott is fond.*"

Although he had found this letter on his office table that morning, at a few minutes before ten, Hugh Triscott, to whom the handwriting was only too familiar, who saw in the missive the last feeble shot from the exhausted locker of a rogue, had deliberately, contemptuously placed it aside. He had opened other envelopes, called in his confidential clerk, dictated certain letters, written others, had, as was his habit, broken the back of his day's correspondence in one swift ninety minutes' work. But though he could scorn the anonymous menace his brain buzzed with other distracting thoughts. No work was able to expel them; they were always with him subconsciously, even while he forced himself to write.

Then he rose, walked to the door; for coolness opened it and pushed it wide. Five, ten, fifteen minutes he stayed there. And there came to him, as he tarried, many and varied noises, voices of men, voices of women, asking, informing, apologizing, purchasing, ribbon-hunting, linen-seeking, uttering innumerable commonplaces. Amid this rout and uproar one thing alone articulate—as it were, a high treble note, struck at irregular intervals in a low-set composition—coming to Hugh Triscott as he stood there—that preposterous monosyllable, "Sign!"

"Sign!"

To this man—who was a draper and looked like a law-officer of the Crown, informed with such humanity as the lawyer seldom knows—this short, sibilant call stood for all that he most hated, for everything which he had forced himself to achieve.

His father—the cadet of a Cornish family, fallen for generations upon evil days—had tramped his way to Murcester fifty years before, had got work at a shop, had made himself indispensable, had finally owned where, first of all, he had served. In the old cathedral city there was room for new enterprise. John Triscott supplied the need. The business grew and prospered; the ancient High Street saw the rise of premises vast and palatial in comparison with those of other firms. This Cornishman had all the qualities which command success. But he had, too, the faults of them—terrible obstinacy, monstrous egoism, an overwhelming, yet perhaps excusable, pride in what he, single-handed, had done. He refused to turn the business into a company; he would be, he said, "John Triscott," not "John Triscott *and Co.*" In which attitude Death discovered him—just after he had made his will. Death, and that will, brought Hugh back from Oxford, where the boy was in his third year. This scholar of Balliol, this barrister in embryo, was chained henceforth to commerce, bound over irrevocably "to sell the ribbons," to manage and control the destinies of a Drapery House which must not become a company till the passing of twenty years.

What Hugh had suffered no one had even guessed at; all, indeed, envied him his heritage and power. "Lucky beggar, Triscott, to have all that money and to be his own master so young!" "Bit low down, running an emporium!" "Rubbish, man! I wish I'd the chance at the price." Such the talk of the townsfolk and of his contemporaries at school. In Hugh, silence and loyal, devoted work. And because things done difficultly, laboriously, with outpouring of blood and tears, are worth to the doer and to the community many times more than things done easily and without effort, this man, who had gone through the furnace of self-denial, was, for his strivings, just so much better a man as Triscott's, the Drapery House, was better organized, more efficient, more valuable to Murcester than in its founder's day.

Hugh Triscott was a force to his fellow-citizens, an influence upon his underlings, a high, clean, good example to the town. Yet, for all this, he was a fish out of water—a square peg hacked to fill a rounded hole.

He liked people. *They* respected him—but understood him not at all. His long self-sacrifice had given him a certain, a pronounced aloofness, which isolated him mentally, which compelled him, always, to walk lonely and remote.

And the one chance of real, as he felt it, perfect happiness—the thing that he wanted more than anything in the world—had been snatched from him by his younger brother's hands.

In the big, red-brick, Georgian house, which his father had bought, whose gardens sloped to the sleepy Severn's bank, his mother's sister kept house for him, and his brother—now a captain in the gunners—sometimes stayed. There was one other person, at once, to Hugh Triscott, everything and nothing at all. She, Joan Vincent, was his ward—the sister of a fellow-Cathedral collegian who had died, penniless, fifteen years back. And the child, then twelve, now a woman of twenty-seven, had steadily, imperceptibly twined herself round her self-constituted guardian's heart. Only a long, fierce, almost-lost but gloriously victorious battle with a firm of London drapers bent upon establishing branches in the big provincial towns, intent upon crushing out smaller proprietary firms, had prevented Hugh from asking her to become his wife. She had refused—he knew it—half the eligible men who visited the house; his, surely, was the right to woo her, at last. But on the verge of financial disaster—the fight, with changing fortunes, had lasted nearly two years—he had waited till the future was more sure. Then, one day, he had seen that she shunned him; had sought for cause and reason of it; had found it all too soon. She was in love with his brother Frank.

There had been another sort of battle; one fierce wrestle, then the accustomed vanquishing of self. "She's too young for me—years too young. It's the old, old story. I like people so awfully, so tremendously more than they like *me*. I must see that she's made happy. Frank's five hundred is insufficient. I must add to it when they marry—and the sooner they marry the happier for us all. Frank must come down in August. I know he likes her. I must throw them together. If necessary, I must open Frank's eyes."

And now August had come and Frank was at Meadowlands, and—and—well, it was now a question of days.

It was of this that Hugh Triscott was thinking as he leaned there in the doorway, hearing nothing, seeing nothing, the thoughts chasing, like tumbling waves, across his brain. It was Joan who obsessed him, who made work so difficult, who so drove him to wonder and to dream. Her happiness—which was everything to him—would she find it after all? Was Frank, dashing and debonair, quite—though she loved him—the man? A woman like Joan, with her tastes, her highly critical intellect, her wide outlook and interests—was she not risking disaster in giving herself to this handsome, stupid (he *was* stupid) soldier who, save for a love of horses, had no tastes which she might share? Love plays strange tricks and films the clearest-seeing eyes. But oftentimes the film passes, and love lasts, and suffering comes to stay. Hugh Triscott, wanting only to do what was right, groped in a forest of bewilderment, striving, as yet unsuccessfully, to see where right might lie. He had done well to withdraw himself from the contest, not to force himself upon a woman who had a deep sense of what she owed to him, yet who loved another man. But had he done well to bring Frank to Meadowlands? Was Frank—it had to be faced valiantly—was Frank quite steady, quite straight, quite *sound?*

And this doubt of his brother, odious but invincible, gathered strength and grew.

There had been youthful wildness, many debts, much contrition, then a steadying down. Early errantries were nothing; they are the lot of all high-spirited youth. But had the steadying been permanent, or was Frank living fast? Things little and slender—things heard, seen, hinted, half confessed—all returned upon the man in the doorway, linking themselves together, forming into one long and damning chain. Yes; Frank *was* in financial trouble; and surely, for a gunner, that yearly five hundred was enough. Tiny evasions, small furtivenesses, scarce-noticed shirkings of the truth leaped to Hugh Triscott's memory, set fear's finger, cold and sinister, at his heart. He had hungered to work for Joan's happiness. Had his action been—was it still—a huge, a monstrous mistake? He loved his brother deeply; but beside Joan his brother did not count. For Hugh loved Joan as he could never love anyone—and with him Joan came first. In the maze of self-questioning, in his loneliness, his remoteness from his fellows, this man's silent cry was pitiful, almost despairing, now.

"My God! is Frank the man for her? Have I done the wrong thing? Have I worked for her unhappiness? Oh, it's so hard, so terribly hard, to know!"

He turned, walked to his table, stood there, fingering at a paper-weight, lifted it, took the paper which it had covered and, still standing, for sheer distraction, read :—

"*Mr. Triscott will remember that on the night of May 21st, fifteen months ago, his business premises were set on fire by some person unknown. If Mr. Triscott will see the writer of this letter at noon to-morrow, there may still be time to save someone of whom Mr. Triscott is fond.*"

"THE PAPER, CRUSHED AND CRINKLING, WAS GRIPPED AND TWISTED IN HUGH TRISCOTT'S HAND."

"Faugh!" The paper, crushed and crinkling, was gripped and twisted in Hugh Triscott's hand. "Faugh! A rogue's spent missile; the final feeble effort of a baffled liar and thief!" And the hand lifted, to gather impetus for its own down-coming, to get force to dash floorwards this scrap of dirtiness as it deserved. Then stopped. Swift instinct stayed it; instinct, and a strong man's gift for plucking good from bad. This scrap of paper—lying, worthless though it were—might cloak some truth, reveal some happening; might prove the clue to his questionings, the solution of his difficulty, the key which must jail Joan's happiness or unlock for her the very palace of joy. In the letter itself there was nothing; from the writer of it much of value might come. "Don't see him," said Inclination; "it's sheerest waste of time." "Grant him an interview," said Duty. "Don't shirk—don't avoid the trouble. It's the thing that's nearest; do it; it always pays." Hugh Triscott, trained to duty, heard Duty's voice, and obeyed. For he who, loathing them, had forced himself to detail and system, knew, more than any man, the value of slender things.

"Baynes. I must see Baynes. He is lying—I know it — the insurance company knows it; but through him, not *from* him, I shall somehow get what I want. He knows something and is building on it—he writes of 'someone of whom I am fond.' That means Frank—or Joan, even. This lie harms or helps them; it is my business to find out which. I'll see Baynes; I'll cross-question him. I'll add his knowledge to mine. Then, if I *must* go to Frank — about his difficulties — I go forewarned, fore-armed.

He sat down at his table, pressed the bell-button once, smoothed out the crushed letter, folded it, restored it to its place. There was a knock at the door, then an entrance which waited no answering call. It was Harrison, the assistant manager, once John Triscott's, now his son's, right hand.

"You wanted me, Mr. Hugh?"

The spare, florid, well-preserved man of

sixty took a chair to the right of the table, sat there, looking at his employer with a fondness which had become a habit, with an affection which daily intercourse increased. They had, these two men, that lasting mutual regard which is known only to those who have worked together for years, who have pulled in the same team, have breasted together the high and difficult hills. Hardly less to Harrison than to Hugh himself did the firm owe its salvation. Without Harrison's loyal, heart-whole help the Londoners would have beaten it in the great struggle for existence, would have exterminated "John Triscott" as, elsewhere, they had crushed and ruined so many of his kind.

"There are one or two small things that want seeing to." Hugh Triscott tore a page from a memorandum pad and handed it across. "You'll find a note of them here, Harrison. I'm lunching at the Shire Hall again. That boy-scout meeting, you know."

"Very good, Mr. Hugh." The young-old employé hesitated, half got up, then dropped back into his chair. "Er—Mr. Hugh, there's a small matter I wanted to speak to you about. Would it be convenient now?"

"Quite." The "small matter"—Hugh knew it—would be but the preface to gossip—that one sign in Harrison of advancing years. But he nodded acquiescence, smiled in tender indulgence of his loyal helper's fault. "Quite—if you get through it quickly. What's the trouble now?"

"It's about Satterthwaites."

"Satterthwaites?"

"Yes, Mr. Hugh. They want a good talking to—a good fright. That last lot of blouses was rank bad. They've gone too close to the wind far too often. A straight hint to young Satterthwaite 'ud do no harm."

"I agree with you. He shall have it. I'm going up to town next week."

"But that's about floating us, Mr. Hugh. You'll be too busy——"

"I'll find time to look in at Wood Street, all the same. We can't afford to sell poor stuff. Now that we've got Pullar, Radice, and Tyler out of Murcester we must back our luck!"

The other smiled triumphantly, vainGloriously, as is the privilege of a trusted employé who has helped a firm across the shoals. He was drifting into that daily, tolerated, ten minutes' irrelevant talk which had become part and parcel of his existence, as necessary to him as meat and drink. "Yes; our luck's splendid—splendid—and, I say, Mr. Hugh, when the prospectus is issued we shall be subscribed for ten times over in Murcester alone. It all comes—our luck, I mean—from the day of that lucky fire."

"The fire!"

Hugh Triscott almost started—failed, for once, to be outwardly calm. It was of the fire that he had himself been thinking, and his helper's words chimed with his inmost thoughts. "The fire, Harrison? What on earth do you mean?" But even as he spoke he regretted the question—saw that he had given garrulity rein.

"What I've always said, Mr. Hugh. It was a small matter, I know; just your room burnt out—and more noise than harm. But it made Murcester rally round you; it made people—well, 'patriotic,' if you understand. They realized the fight you were having, they came to the rescue, they wanted to see the Londoners beat. Till then they'd only been looking on. They tell me"—even six months after the victory Harrison's voice thrilled at the splendid thought—"they tell me that at the end Pullar, Radices didn't serve fifty customers a day. It was just your popularity, Mr. Hugh——"

"Oh, nonsense, Harrison; that's all tommy-rot! We sold better stuff for the money; that's the explana——"

A knock at the door stopped him dead. Harrison started and turned round. The knock was repeated. Timid the first time, its successor was loud and bold. It was as if the person outside vacillated between fear and courage—of a kind.

Hugh Triscott swung round in his chair.

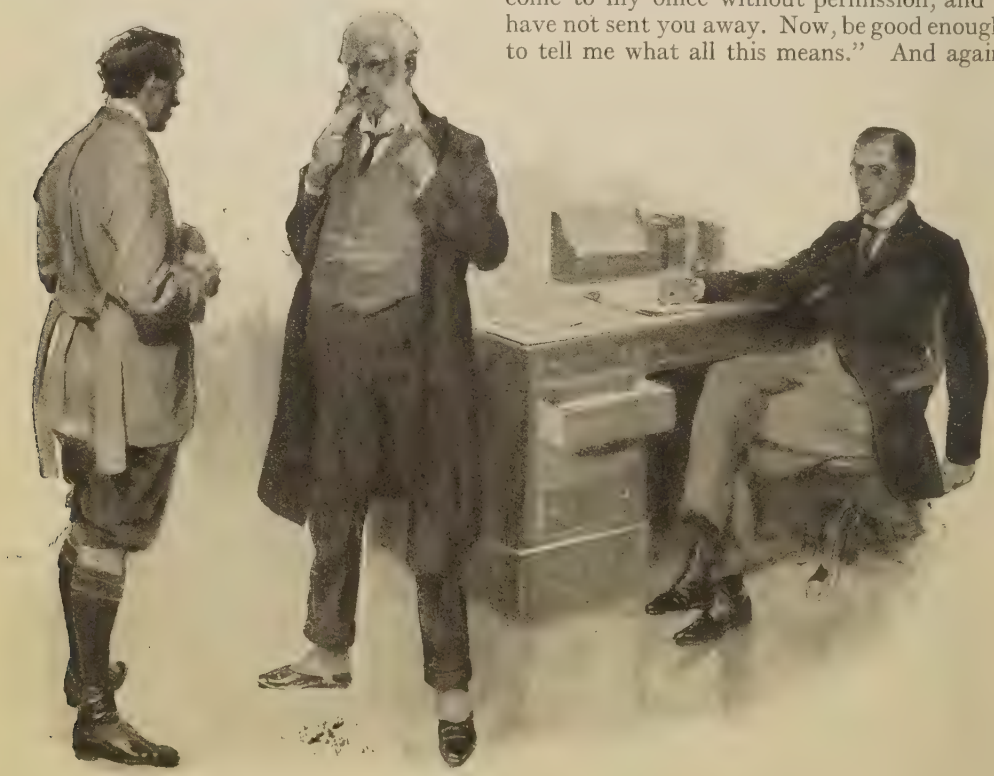
"Come in!" he called. "Come in!"

And a man entered, walking boldly, with jaunty legs. Yet his hands, strangely contrasting, plucked nervously at his cap. At the sight of him Hugh moved no muscle. Harrison rose to his feet and gasped.

The man was small of stature, thin-bodied, lean of frame. Everything was mean about him, most noticeably his legs. He had a long, loose-fleshed face, a wicked, much-lined mouth, devilish green eyes with countless crows' feet rimming them, and there was a round, deep cleft in his chin. He wore knickerbockers and a Norfolk coat, each immensely shabby, and as if, having come to the end of his wardrobe, these garments of recreation alone remained. He was Harrison's nephew—whom Harrison had urged upon his employer against his employer's judgment—the very able, of necessity much-trusted confidential clerk, afterwards thiever of petty cash, forger on a small scale, stealer of postal orders sent by customers who dealt

with Triscott's by post. He had robbed the firm during the firm's hard fight with the Londoners; his defalcations had been detected when the fight was done and won. And the master who had spared him from prison it was now his purpose to blackmail.

"What does this mean? What are you doing here? I'll send for a policeman. I'll——" And Harrison, who held this Baynes in horror, who knew him not only as dishonest, but as ingrate of the worst sort, jumped forward to expel him from the room. But Hugh Triscott stayed his hand.



"WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?"

"Stop, Harrison. I wish to see him. It's—— He wrote asking for an appointment at noon."

"An appointment!" Harrison, at the audacity, gasped again. "But, sir, you're too kind-hearted. He isn't worth it. Kindness is wasted on such a man!"

"Harrison, this is my affair. I wish to speak to Baynes a moment. Kindly leave us alone."

The old employé hesitated, looked at his master, weighed and knew the tone. It was no use arguing with Hugh Triscott when he spoke like that. He shrugged his shoulders, gave one imploring look, and, getting no response, went out. As the door closed upon him Hugh Triscott pointed to a chair.

"Sit down, Baynes."

The little man obeyed, seated himself with assumed alacrity, crossed his jaunty legs, twisted his peaked cloth cap between belying hands. Hugh Triscott regarded him quietly, with calm and disconcerting eyes. Then he lifted the paper-weight, took up the anonymous letter, extended it between finger and thumb.

"You sent this to me, Baynes. You have come to my office without permission, and I have not sent you away. Now, be good enough to tell me what all this means." And again his eyes held those green eyes, which made the loose-fleshed face like the face of a "Mr. Envy and Hatred" in some old Morality play.

The little man blustered into courage, spoke quickly, shot the accusation out.

"It's the fire—the fire fifteen months ago. I—I've come about that!"

"I know you have." Hugh's voice was quiet, encouraging. "Your letter here admits it. I wish to hear your statement. What does the last sentence mean?"

"The last sentence?"

"Yes, the last sentence. I'll read it to

you, that you sha'n't say I didn't give you fair play. '*If Mr. Triscott will see the writer of this letter at noon to-morrow, there may still be time to save someone of whom Mr. Triscott is fond.*' Now, Baynes, your explanation. Who is it that there may still be time to save ?"

The little man put his cap on the table, clasped a knee, shifted his hands again, then pulled out of a trousers-pocket something which a hand concealed.

"It's the Captain," he said, jerkily. "The Captain. He set fire to the place. I heard him say something. I suspected he'd do it. I hid behind a bale and watched."

Hugh Triscott made no answer, just looked at him, knew that he lied, and himself sat quiet and unmoved. Yet his senses were keen and tight-strung. He was fighting for the happiness of the woman and the brother whom he loved. He was concentrating fiercely, with all the force of his being, upon one thing alone. That thing the disentangling of truth from falsehood ; the winnowing of those few grains of fact which must be there, for the finding, amid this multitudinous chaff of lies. The barrister that he was born to be revived in him ; each question he asked was put with cross-examining intent.

"You hid behind a bale and watched. What made you do that ?" There was no anger in the question. The quiet voice still encouraged—almost, indeed, soothed.

"I knew the Captain was in difficulties. He'd told me as much when I was up at Meadowfields at work—that week you were at home with the chill. He asked me about hunters, and what sort of a place Murcester was for selling them in ; and then we talked about 'Pullar, Radices', and the struggle you were having, and how it meant ruin to you —and *him*—if they won. Then he tried to pump me about the insurance and how much it was. And I saw he was hard-up—and I began to see his game."

"Yes ; go on, Baynes, please."

"So—well, you know all about the books, and how I stayed late trying to hi—to cover up what afterwards got found out. Well, one night he came."

"My brother ?"

"Yes ; the Captain. He had a little brown bag with him, a sort of suit-case. He went into your room—he'd got your keys. Then he came out again and left the building by your private door, and I smelt smoke. I rushed in and found some shavings burning, and on the table was a silver match-box, and—and I've got it here !"

"Yes."

"It's got the Captain's monogram on it, and inside of it there are those big Savory's matches that the Captain likes to use."

"Yes ; quite so. And after that ?"

"I ran out—out of the place."

"You didn't give the alarm ! Why ?"

"I thought the same as the Captain—that thirty thousand from the Insurance Company and a fresh start for Triscott's was better than losing the lot."

"I see." Hugh Triscott leaned forward, left elbow on the desk, chin on the palm of his left hand, the top joint of the fingers pressing at his lower lip. He was calm outwardly, calm as ever, but in his head a voice shouted, clamouring its joy. "I've got it ; I've got it ! Frank's a good chap—but a duffer ; he's sound enough—but foolish ! Everything has come out clear and plain and smooth !" And his heart was high with hope and the blood in his veins ran proudly, for he knew that he had discovered truth's pearl in this ocean of iniquity, and that with a clear conscience and a free, unshackled hand he could minister to the happiness of those whom he held most dear. His own happiness ? He never thought of it. He had long since lost the habit—he had seldom, these twenty years, had time.

And presently he resumed the attack.

"You say that my brother spoke to you about selling his hunters. Why should he speak to you about such a thing as that ?"

"Because I was in with racing people, I suppose."

"Oh, yes ; quite so." And Hugh was silent again. Here was the clue to the mystery — this, the long-sought-for key. Frank *had* sold the hunters. But he had sold them in London, not in Murcester, where no market existed, where no one who knew anything would ever dream of offering them for sale. How had Baynes heard of it, unless he had actually sugges ed — pressed — the sale ; unless, in a word, he were blackmailing Frank. He was—he was blackmailing him—and Frank, though it seemed unbelievable, had been fool enough to pay ! And now Frank — poor Frank ! — had exhausted his immediate resources. Baynes clamoured for money, could not get it, and, seeking another victim, had come to him, Hugh. The whole devilish scheme seemed to him to be clear—to be at his fingers' ends—to be torn asunder and disclosed. He was wrong. He had divined only a part of it. Even *his* keenness failed completely to fathom an attempt so daring as this.

He spoke again—calm still ; so great his

self-control—t ok up, repeated Bayne's last untruth.

" ' Because you were in with racing people.' Oh, yes, I remember very well. That was your excuse when we discovered your thefts. You'd got mixed up with bookmakers; you'd had bad luck. Well, Baynes, another question. Why are you here?"

Baynes picked his cap from the table, twisted it, hesitated, then shot out the truth.

" Because I want money. I want——"

" Why"—Hugh Triscott bent upon him his keenest, shrewdest glance—" why didn't you come earlier—six months ago, say? Why leave this visit till so long after you were dismissed?"

" There was no need to make it. I was bookmaking—doing well. But last week was a bad one. I want money."

" And you couldn't get it quickly enough from my brother, so you came to blackmail *me*. Well, you've come to the wrong man."

Baynes stayed speechless, looked at him, realized him unshakable, not to be frightened—saw, suddenly, that his dastard effort had failed. The green eyes flashed, lit up the whole mean face, so that it glittered with hatred, malice, and revenge.

" Do you mean that?" he blustered. " Yes, by Heaven, you do. Then the Captain shall go to prison. I'll publish the truth to the world."

The other stood over him, hands in pockets, smiling, contemptuous, grim. Hugh's mask had lifted a little. The scoundrel could see and wince at the clean man's contempt for a cur.

" Baynes," said Hugh Triscott, quietly, " I know that the fire occurred through the combustion of a tin of carbide in my room. The Insurance Company knows it, and is satisfied, and has paid. I didn't see you because I was frightened of you. I saw you because I wanted to find out something which I wanted to know. I've found it out—you've happened to give yourself away. But don't let that deter you in the least. Someone once tried to blackmail the Duke of Wellington. The Duke of Wellington told them to ' publish and be damned.' Now, good day to you. Go and do as you please."

Then, in the happiness of his heart—after twenty years of self-discipline—he allowed himself a holiday, for once. He did not, as he wanted to, take Baynes by the collar, kick him down the staircase, and out into the street through the shop. But he extracted a hand from a pocket, took an ear of the blackmailer, lifted him to his feet, led him, protesting, to the door. He opened it, relinquished his grip, and gently pushed the scoundrel from the room.

" Publish and be damned," he whispered. And Hugh Triscott, smiling, shut the door again, went back to his chair, and sat down. Then he frowned for full five minutes. There was more than a something of bitterness in the victorious cup of joy. This scoundrel must go unprosecuted—or Frank must be exposed as a fool.

But he smiled again presently—for light had come to him, and he was happy in the happiness of those he loved. And in the knowledge that he had drawn truth from falsehood he was proud—as a man who achieves a fair purpose has every right to be. Yet presently the smile faded and the eyes which had seen so clearly grew dim. The long habit of self-discipline had not saved him from suffering; it could not console him, comfort him, now that he was going to be alone. Alone! How much alone he began to glimpse at, and, glimpsing, put the thought away. He rose, washed, coated himself appropriately for the luncheon at the Guildhall. And Hugh Triscott, erect and gallant, went out of the Emporium wearing the long-worn mask.

He spoke—he, the town's chief orator—and, though his face showed nothing, something of his emotion throbbed, this afternoon, in his voice. The council was fêting the boy-scouts of the county; a famous general was to hold them in review. The famous general was more than a mere soldier; he was a great man, a reader of the hearts of men. This tall, sleek, frock-coated civilian spoke to the scouts of duty and service, not merely glibly, fluently, with a skilled orator's utterance, but as if, having practised them, he knew all which these manly virtues meant. And the great general, hours afterwards, taking tea on the terrace of a great noble's house, five miles from Murcester, sat silent a space, then asked, without warning, this:—

" Who was the tall man who spoke just at the end? The one who quoted Tennyson about self-knowledge and self-control, and whose speech went down so wonderfully with the boys?"

" That!" The great noble was no wastrel-lordling, but one who had long served the Empire in peace and war. " That was Triscott, the draper. A fine—a very fine chap."

" A draper! You don't mean it! He looked like a law officer of the Crown."

"Exactly. I always say so. It's a good family—and—well, an exceptional case." And the great noble gave Hugh's history—the history of the brilliant scholar who had never taken his degree. And he ended like this :—

"The twenty years is up now, and he's floating it as a company—within the next few weeks. He'll get leisure—much more leisure, then. Poor chap! I'm glad of it. He's had a terribly rough time. By the way, I—*we*, I mean—intend to run him as member for the city when Barraclough retires next year."

And the great general had nodded his agreement, and had spoken thus :—

"He'll do you credit—he'll make a statesman; he's a proper pukka chap!"

Meanwhile the man they talked of was at work in his room at the shop.

It was six when he finished, and then he left the building which fronted Queen Elinor's Cross. He passed down the old and narrow High Street, went over the bridge southwards, walked along the bank of the river, came to and unlocked a nail-studded gate in an ancient red-brick wall. And, traversing his own parched August lawns and dry, dust-strewn shrubberies, he came to the conservatory which flanked the red-brick house. It gave upon a room which was used as a lounge. And as he entered he heard muffled sounds beyond—knew them for the voices of two people that he loved.

He paused—not to eavesdrop but to get steady—to brace himself for all that he had to do. His it was to act as fairy godfather, to be the harbinger of happiness and, losing all that he most cared for, to pretend that his own happiness was complete. So, then, he dropped into a wicker chair at the far end of the conservatory — sat there, collecting thought, driving himself into strength for his task. And presently, to him resting there, came sounds no longer muffled, but words clear and articulate—voices eager, protesting, raised.

"HE LED HIM, PROTESTING, TO THE DOOR."

"Frank, you must tell him!"

"Joan, I daren't—I can't!"

"It isn't true, I tell you."

"Joan, it is; it *is*. Remember all we know."

"Frank, I won't hear it. You mean well, but you wrong him. You must go to him, tell him all."

"I can't; it's impossible!"

"Very well, then, Frank. *I shall.*"

Hugh Triscott listened no longer. He leaped up, crossed the conservatory, came swiftly into the room. Joan gasped, but stepped forward. Frank stammered—and stepped back.

"Hugh—you heard me?"

"Hugh—you were there, outside?"

For a moment they stayed quite still, stood looking at each other, these three people; the men dark-haired, blue-eyed—the one clean-shaven, the other black-moustached, both tall, fine-figured, touched with race; the girl fair-haired, straight-featured, clean-complexioned, all that is most English in her sporting yet soberest attire. Then the elder brother came to the younger one; took and shook him by the hand.

"Dear old man, it was awful for you. You ought to have come to me at once!"

"Come to you!" Frank Triscott blurted. "Come to you? Then you *know!*"

"Know—of course I do. I know that Baynes blackmailed you—that he stole your matchbox — that he threatened to expose you—and that, like a dear old ass, you paid. You've been in awful trouble; you've sold your hunters—and Heaven knows what else. But I'm going to make it up to you, Frank. Yes, by Jove, I'll see to that!"

"What!"

Joan Vincent managed the monosyllable; Frank Triscott had no words. They stared wide-eyed, while Hugh smiled at them. Then Joan Vincent spoke, threw out a hand towards Frank.

"You say—that Baynes—threatened to expose—*him?*"

"Yes, Joan; of course he did. And poor old Frank, not knowing anything about business—and rascals—paid—and went on with it, once he'd begun. Old man, come, now, isn't that so?" And Hugh asked his brother the question with eyes as well as lips.

"No!"

The swift-flung word and the quick denial that his brother's face showed him sent Hugh staggering back.

"No? Then—then I'm wrong; it isn't so. I haven't got at the truth!"

"The truth, Hugh!" It was Frank who answered, breathlessly. "Only a half—not that—a third."

"A half—a third of it! I can't grasp things. He *didn't* blackmail you, after all!"

"Yes, he did; and, curse him, he bled me. I gave him all the ready I could raise."

"Then what on earth——"

Joan Vincent came to the rescue, set a hand lightly on Hugh's arm. Frank was incapable of coherent speech.

"Hugh, it was not Frank, but *you*, that Baynes charged with arson. He came to Frank; he showed him *your* match-box; he said he saw *you* light the fire."

"And Frank——"

"Frank has been paying for you all this last twelve months. When Frank had nothing he could lay hands on, and Baynes wanted money immediately, Baynes came to you."

"Yes, Joan. That part of it at least I guessed. But not that Baynes had accused *me* of it. Heavens! what a scoundrel he is!"

"And then"—Joan Vincent went on with it—"and then Baynes came to *me*."

"To you, Joan! *You!*" Then Hugh, who had discovered one-third of it, saw, in a flash, the whole. "Oh, I see—I see all. When Frank was dry and I refused him, Baynes came to you this afternoon."

"Yes, he accused you to me. And I told him"—Joan Vincent's eyes were bright—"I told him that he lied. Then I came to Frank. He told me what he'd been doing, and I said he'd made a fool of himself, and that *I* believed in you."

"Joan!" Hugh Triscott stepped forward, took and wrung her hand.

"Yes; and I was coming straight to you—as soon as you got home."

"Thank you, Joan." Hugh stooped, kissed, and still retained her hand. "Then"—he turned now to his brother—"then Baynes has tried the lot of us. Poor, poor old Frank! You're not a business man. What a stupid old duffer you've been! It was awfully, awfully good of you—but"—Hugh's voice reproached gently—"how did you believe it of me, old chap?"

"Well"—Frank blushed, stammered, feeling the fool that he had been—"well, there was the match-box, Baynes's story, his cunning tale, your own words."

"My own words?"

"Yes, Hugh. I heard you say—the evening before the fire—that it looked as if only a fire could save you. And you looked so worried after it, and wouldn't talk about it.

and so kept out of Joan's way and mine that I didn't want to add to your worries, but just put two and two together."

"And made them fifteen. Well"—Hugh laughed a little ruefully—"well, I'm no better. You proved your affection for me, and I—I doubted your worth. But I'll make reparation—reparation for you and Joan. I'll double that five hundred; and, I say, you—you must get married at once."

It was as if he had thrown at them a hand-grenade charged with speech-deadening fumes. There was a long, long silence; then from Frank a belated echo of the most astounding word.

"Married!" he said.

And Joan Vincent, echoing the echo, exclaimed after him: "Married—married—*we!*"

"Yes." Hugh smiled at them. "You love each other, of course?"

"Love *him*—Frank?"

"I love *her*—Joan?"

Joan Vincent turned suddenly windowwards, walked across the room. Frank put a hand to his forehead, rubbed his bewildered eyes. Then, for all his stupidness, he saw what his cleverer brother was not clever enough to see. And, coming forward, he uttered the splendid truth.

"Hugh, she doesn't care twopence for me; she's in love—she's always been—in love with you. She thought you didn't care for her, and I thought—old man, forgive me—that you'd behaved anything but well. But I see you do care for her. One fool's enough in a family. Go—go and make everything straight."

At that he blundered into the conservatory, thence into the garden beyond. And Hugh was alone with Joan.

There was another long silence. For Hugh, dizzy with wonderment, needed space to breathe. Happiness half-stunned, half-paralyzed him; truth, in its sudden splendour, for a minute had made him dumb. Then power of movement returned to him; after it power of speech. He advanced towards her—she had still her back to him—he called her by her name.

"Joan," he said. "Joan!"

She turned and came forward—a pace or two, no more. He bridged the gulf between them in, as it seemed, a single step.

"Joan, is it true—what Frank has just now said? You do love me—you've loved me a long while?"

"For seven years, Hugh," she answered. "And perhaps longer still."

And as—cursing his long blindness, blessing his new-found sight—he took her in his arms and kissed her, things somehow seemed beautiful and completed; brought with them a sense of just-all-rightness, a feeling that the future lay before him, no longer hard and difficult, but fair and smooth and out-rolled. All his life he had given; now he was blessedly to receive. Yet, receiving, still to go on giving, to be, always, prodigal of that duty and that service which are the diamonds and the pearls of love.

"HE TOOK HER IN HIS ARMS."

HOW CAN WE GET A GOOD STAMP?

The admitted failure of the new British stamps has suggested the idea of the following article. The stamps here reproduced are those which are generally acknowledged to be the finest and most artistic designs existing, with the substitution of King George's head or other such alterations as would make them adapted for use in this country. These are the kind of stamps which we should like to see on our letters, and perhaps our designers will make an effort to turn out something which may resemble or surpass them.

MANY years ago an ingenious individual circulated the following advertisement :—

> **ATTENTION! ART LOVERS! A beautiful steel engraving of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, executed by one of the first artists of the Kingdom, and issued under the auspices of the Earl of Beaconsfield. Sent post free on receipt of 6½d.**

Naturally, there was an immediate rush on the part of thousands to secure this rare art treasure, which turned out to be nothing more or less than a halfpenny postage-stamp. It is related that there was some talk of prosecuting the dealer, but he stoutly maintained that he had spoken no more than the truth in his description ; and, as he professed himself ready to exchange the stamp for some other commodity in his line, many forgave him the "sell" in virtue of its ingenuity.

But times have changed sadly in the last forty years. Whatever the merits of the postage-stamp issue of the reign of Victoria, no such description can apply to the recent issue of the reign of George V. By no stretch of fact or hyperbole could the little coloured certificate we buy from the haughty damsel behind the post-office counter be described as a "beautiful steel engraving." The person who seriously held that opinion ought in charity to be conveyed to the nearest blind asylum.

We have been told of a young lady with the shopping habit going to a post-office and asking to look at some postage-stamps.

"What denomination ?" asks the clerk.

"Oh, I'm a Presbyterian."

"No, I mean what price ?"

"Oh," is the reply, "I'm not particular about the price. Let me see some really nice ones. Are those the best you have ? Then I think I'll use the telephone."

It is hardly too much to say that a wave of protest swept the whole country on the appearance of the new stamps. One fastidious correspondent announced that no consideration would induce him to use the objectionable designs ; he had decided to allow all his friends to be surcharged on his letters. Another suggests that the Government should buy up millions of Dickens stamps, and use them during the Dickens centenary year for postage. One even wants the Postmaster-General impeached for debasing the King's effigy! The *Times* and every newspaper in the kingdom have printed hundreds of criticisms of the new stamps, and dozens of questions have been asked in Parliament. And, indeed, one wonders why the stamp should not have been better, or why it should have been left to Great Britain to produce what is undoubtedly the worst stamp in the world when there are, amongst the members of the world's Postal Union, so many precedents for producing a really good stamp.

Some critics find fault with one portion of the design, some with another ; some blame the artist, some the engraver, and some the printer, while others blame all three.

One London newspaper declares : "The King's head is too small ; indeed, it gives the impression of being insignificant," and adds that "the representation of His Majesty's features is as unlike His Majesty as anything we have ever seen."

Mr. Evelyn Cecil, M.P., in asking a question about the stamps in Parliament, referred to "the complete want of resemblance of the portrait of His Majesty." This is surely a defect fatal enough in itself to condemn the stamps. We are bound to suppose that a

good portrait of the King was selected in the first place, and therefore it must be the reproduction that is in fault; probably the original drawing was on too large a scale, and in the process of reduction the finer lines have run together into masses of colour.

"The most important part of the design," writes Mr. Stanley Gibbons, who courteously furnishes us with what he considers the best stamps extant, "is, of course, the portrait of the Sovereign—important, both as the most fitting emblem to appear upon our coins and our stamps, and as, in the opinion of the best judges, the greatest safeguard against forgery. That portrait, rightly to fulfil its purpose, should be both a faithful and a favourable one, and we do not think that anyone can say that the head as it appears upon the stamp is either the one or the other.

"If," continues Mr. Stanley Gibbons, "we take for comparison the first surface-printed stamps of our own country, the fourpence, sixpence, and shilling of 1855–6, again we find nothing to distract attention from the important features of the design; there is fine engraving, and there is ample spacing, with no fancy work to crowd up and overwhelm the portrait with unnecessary detail. A few measurements will show the contrast better than anything. The inner oval containing the King's head on the new stamps is eleven and a half millimetres wide, that on the shilling of 1856 is fourteen and a half millimetres in width, while in the fourpence and sixpence of the same period the head is in a circle nearly eighteen millimetres in diameter; the total width of the stamps is the same as at the present day—hardly nineteen millimetres. The immense difference in the effect produced can be easily understood."

Now, what is the easiest way to rectify the stamp? Why, by finding out what other countries have done, and adopting the best ideas their stamp-makers have to teach us. Or we need not go out of the Empire at all, for some really fine stamps have been produced in Britain and her Colonies.

1.

But suppose we make a beginning with a little insignificant country like Haiti. Annexed is the Haiti two-centimes of 1887, which we have adapted to our own national requirements by substituting the portrait of King George for that of President Salomon and altering the lettering. The result (No. 1) is a really admirable stamp, clean-cut and dignified, beside which our current British ones look weak and exiguous.

2.

Or perhaps an even more striking result, although one less acceptable to the Peace Society, would be the Haiti issue of President Simon Sam (1898) reproduced above (No. 2). The symbol which has no meaning in the case of a diminutive Republic becomes highly significant in the case of a world Power like Great Britain.

Or let us utilize as a basis the artistic five-ore Denmark. See what an excellent result might be obtained with the circular plaques at the side and the Royal cipher immediately underneath the portrait (No. 3).

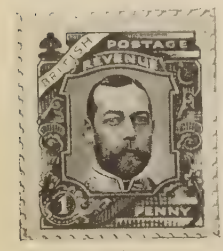
3.

One of the arguments used by the postal authorities for not putting the name of the country of origin on the British issue is its very cumbrous character. They point out the difficulty in finding room for "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland." But what is the matter with "Britain"? More and more is "Britain" coming into use all over the world, just as "America" is now employed universally in place of "The United States of America." To over-fastidious people perhaps even the British Navy is the British-and-Irish Navy; but then what becomes of the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man? No, "Britain" is undoubtedly the word which should appear on our postage-stamps, or, if space permitted, "Great Britain." If critics object to this, there is "The United Kingdom."

Another excellent adaptation might be made of the Belgian stamp of the 1893–1907 issue. The head is a medallion, the denomination being repeated in the upper left-hand and lower right-hand corners (No. 4).

4

We now come to a somewhat more intricate design, based on the stamp of the Republic of Honduras (1893). This, as may be seen, is a very interesting arrangement of scroll-work (No. 5). For the portrait of General Cabanas we introduce what our own issue cannot boast—an excellent portrait of King George.



5.

Then there is the Austrian 1908 issue (No. 6). Here the lettering might perhaps be considered a trifle bold; but, after all, this is a virtue in the eyes of many. Apart from this feature its simplicity is manifest.

6.

A far more attractive design is that of the recent Peruvian issue (No. 7). This, even when printed in a single colour, is very effective, and a really fine example of engraving, although perhaps the scroll-work is a trifle tropical for a country in the latitude of this kingdom.

7.

Another Belgian issue which has won universal commendation is the last of the late King Leopold. Using this as the basis of our new stamp, the engraver might produce a very effective design. Instead of using medallion portraits of His Majesty, one might be introduced with the King in naval uniform, wearing a cocked hat. The result, as shown in No. 8, certainly justifies the innovation, because, after all, our monarch is a sea-King, and might properly wear his naval uniform, just as the foreign monarchs appearing on the postage-stamps of their respective countries are portrayed in military uniform. It will be noticed that only the numerals are here given in recording the denomination; but surely this is all that is really essential?

8.

Perhaps an even more notable design, equal in grace to the exquisite manner in which it is engraved, is the new Swedish stamp (No. 9). Why should we not, if necessary, construct our new stamp on such a model as this? If we did, we would reach a very high degree of merit. Note the triple crowns below the portrait of the King, signifying the three kingdoms, also the scrolls of oak and bay leaves. We commend this design to the attention of the Postmaster-General.

9.

If there are some who would like to substitute an allegorical or symbolical figure for that of the Royal portrait, we could hardly do better than go to our own possession of Barbados, which years ago produced an excellent delineation of Britannia ruling the waves (No. 10).

10.

From the last Royal Portuguese issue (No. 11) much might be learnt by our postal authorities, for, with the necessary alterations, a most satisfactory result might be obtained.

11.

According to most of the leading philatelic authorities, including the one already mentioned, the most admirable stamp in dignity of design and beauty of engraving ever produced is the Nova Scotia issue of 1850–60 (No. 12). With such a stamp before their eyes, how could our designers go wrong? It is not as if there were anything uncommon in seeking advice in philatelic or numismatic matters from foreign countries or our Colonies. The King Edward stamps were designed by an Austrian; the new coins, as well as the stamps, have been entrusted to an Australian. At all events, we make the suggestion to His Majesty's Government.

12.

13.

14.

Some object that the head of the monarch on the coins and stamps suggests decapitation, and would prefer to see more torso. To such the Bulgarian examples would be welcome, and the designs shown above (Nos. 13 and 14) for a new British postage-stamp might meet with general approval.

15.

There is an extreme simplicity about the next stamp "essay" (No. 15), which we humbly submit to His Majesty's Government; but it is, as all philatelists know, not without precedent, for it follows the lines of some of the Italian issue, which have merely a portrait of Victor Emmanuel against a plain background. At all events, there is no mistaking its character.

16.

A novel design might be made on the basis of the old Dom Pedro Brazil stamp (No. 16), which is a beautiful piece of engraving, with the fine lines of a banknote. Complaint is made of the diminutive size of King George's head, but perhaps were it even as small as that of King Alfonso's on the Spanish stamps it could still be made effective if the likeness were as good as the latter is. Moreover, the design is neat and tasteful (No. 17).

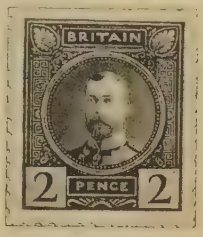
17.

Another simple, unpretentious head with two lines of very plain lettering, one above and the other below, is the Cyprus stamp (No. 18), which might advantageously, in the opinion of many, serve as a model.

18.

For striking contrast in styles it is interesting to compare the classical severity of the early French Republican and the Greek issues (Nos. 19 and 20), either of which might have been modelled two or three

19.



20.

thousand years ago, with the extremely modern examples furnished by the new Bavarian commemorative issue (No. 21), with the pair of Cupids supporting a wreath. This issue has been selected by many competent judges as one of the finest examples, both with regard to design and draughtsmanship, of the present day.

21.

Of equal merit, perhaps, is the Italian Jubilee issue, also of this year. Here we have originality of design and free drawing serving as a signal relief to the eye, weary of the philatelic conventions (No. 22).

It is significant that our own new stamps, poor in design, feeble in execution, and generally condemned, should be issued in the same year as such fine examples of the stamp-designer's art as the foregoing Bavarian and Italian issues. It is a fact which should provide food for thought for all who are interested in the progress of British art. With such examples before them, will our stamp-designers see what they can do?

22.

Thanks are due to Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., and Messrs. Bright & Son for loan of stamps from which our designs were prepared. Photographs of the King's head by Messrs. W. & D. Downey, H. Walter Barnett, W. S. Stuart, and Heath.

SKILLED ASSISTANCE

BY

W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

THE night-watchman, who had left his seat on the jetty to answer the gate-bell, came back with disgust written on a countenance only too well designed to express it.

"If she's been up 'ere once in the last week to know whether the *Silvia* is up, she's been four or five times," he growled. "He's forty-seven if he's a day; 'is left leg is shorter than 'is right, and he talks with a stutter. When she's with 'im you'd think as butter wouldn't melt in 'er mouth; but the way she talked to me just now you'd think I was paid a purpose to wait on her. I asked 'er at last wot she thought I was here for, and she said she didn't know, and nobody else neither. And afore she went off she told the potman from the Albion, wot was listening, that I was known all over Wapping as the Sleeping Beauty.

She ain't the fust I've 'ad words with, not by a lot. They're all the same; they all start in a nice, kind, soapy sort o' way, and, as soon as they don't get wot they want, fly into a temper and ask me who I think I am. I told one woman once not to be silly, and I shall never forget it as long as I live—never. For all I know, she's wearing a bit o' my 'air in a locket to this day, and very likely boasting that I gave it to her.

Talking of her reminds me of another woman. There was a Cap'n Pinner, used to trade between 'ere and Hull on a schooner named the *Snipe*. Nice little craft she was, and 'e was a very nice feller. Many and many's the pint we've 'ad together, turn and turn-about, and the on'y time we ever 'ad a

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cross word was when somebody hid his clay-pipe in my beer and 'e was foolish enough to think I'd done it.

He 'ad a nice little cottage 'e told me about, near Hull, and 'is wife's father, a man of pretty near seventy, lived with 'em. Well-off the old man was, and, as she was his only daughter, they looked to 'ave all his money when he'd gorn. Their only fear was that 'e might marry agin, and, judging from wot 'e used to tell me about the old man, I thought it more than likely.

"If it wasn't for my missis he'd ha' been married over and over agin," he ses one day. "He's like a child playing with gunpowder."

"'Ow would it be to let 'im burn hisself a bit?" I ses.

"If you was to see some o' the gunpowder he wants to play with, you wouldn't talk like that," ses the cap'n. "You'd know better. The on'y thing is to keep 'em apart, and my pore missis is wore to a shadder a-doing of it."

It was just about a month arter that that he brought the old man up to London with 'im. They 'ad some stuff to put out at Smith's Wharf, t'other side of the river, afore they came to us, and though they was on'y there four or five days, it was long enough for that old man to get into trouble.

The skipper told me about it ten minutes arter they was made snug in the inner berth 'ere. He walked up and down like a man with a raging tooth-ache, and arter follering 'im up and down the wharf till I was tired out, I discovered that 'is father-in-law 'ad got 'imself mixed up with a widder-woman ninety years old and weighing twenty stun. Arter he 'ad cooled down a bit, and I 'ad given 'im a few little pats on the shoulder, 'e made it forty-eight years old and fourteen stun.

"He's getting ready to go and meet her now," he ses, "and wot my missis'll say to me, I don't know."

His father-in-law came up on deck as 'e spoke, and began to brush 'imself all over with a clothes-brush. Nice-looking little man 'e was, with blue eyes, and a little white beard, cut to a point, and dressed up in a serge suit with brass buttons, and a white yachting cap. His real name was Mr. Finch, but the skipper called 'im Uncle Dick, and he took such a fancy to me that in five minutes I was calling 'im Uncle Dick too.

"Time I was moving," he ses, by and by. "I've got an app'intment."

"Oh! who with?" ses the skipper, pretending not to know.

"Friend o' mine, in the army," ses the old man, with a wink at me. "So long."

He went off as spry as a boy, and as soon as he'd gorn the skipper started walking back'ards and for'ards agin, and raving.

"Let's 'ope as he's on'y amusing 'imself," I ses.

"Wait till you see 'er," ses the skipper; "then you won't talk foolishness."

As it 'appened she came back with Uncle Dick that evening, to see 'im safe, and I see at once wot sort of a woman it was. She 'adn't been on the wharf five minutes afore you'd ha' thought it belonged to 'er, and when she went and sat on the schooner it seemed to be about 'arf its size. She called the skipper Tom, and sat there as cool as you please holding Uncle Dick's 'and, and patting it.

I took the skipper round to the Bull's Head arter she 'ad gorn, and I wouldn't let 'im say a word until he had 'ad two pints. He felt better then, and some o' the words 'e used surprised me.

"Wot's to be done?" he ses at last. "You see 'ow it is, Bill."

"Can't you get 'im away?" I ses. "Who is she, and wot's 'er name?"

"Her name," ses the skipper, "her name is Jane Maria Elizabith Muffit, and she lives over at Rotherhithe."

"She's very likely married already," I ses.

"Her 'usband died ten years ago," ses the skipper; "passed away in 'is sleep. Overlaid, I should say."

He sat there smoking, and I sat there thinking. Twice 'e spoke to me, and I held my 'and up and said "*H'sh.*" Then I turned to 'im all of a sudden and pinched his arm so hard he nearly dropped 'is beer.

"Is Uncle Dick a nervous man?" I ses.

"Nervous is no name for it," he ses, staring.

"Very good, then," I ses. "I'll send 'er husband to frighten 'im."

The skipper looked at me very strange. "Yes, yes," he ses.

"Frighten 'im out of 'is boots, and make him give 'er up," I ses. "Or better still, get 'im to run away and go into hiding for a time. That 'ud be best, in case 'e found out."

"Found out *wot?*" ses the skipper.

"Found out it wasn't 'er husband," I ses.

"Bill," ses the skipper, very earnest, "this is the fust beer I've 'ad to-day, and I wish I could say the same for you."

I didn't take 'im at fust, but when I did I gave a laugh that brought in two more customers, to see wot was the matter. Then I took 'im by the arm, arter a little trouble,

and, taking 'im back to the wharf, explained my meaning to 'im.

"I know the very man," I ses. "He comes into a public-'ouse down my way sometimes. Artful 'Arry, he's called, and, for 'arf a quid, say, he'll frighten Uncle Dick 'arf to death. He's big and ugly, and picks up a living by selling meerschaum pipes he's found to small men wot don't want 'em. Wonderful gift o' the gab he's got."

We went acrost to the Albion to talk it over. There's several bars there, and the landlady always keeps cotton-wool in 'er ears, not 'aving been brought up to the public line. The skipper told me all 'e knew about Mrs. Muffit, and we arranged that Artful 'Arry should come down at seven o'clock next night, if so be as I could find 'im in time.

I got up early the next arternoon, and as it 'appened, he came into the Duke of Edinburgh five minutes arter I got there. Nasty temper 'e was in, too. He'd just found a meerschaum pipe, as usual, and the very fust man 'e tried to sell it to said that it was the one 'e lost last Christmas, and gave 'im a punch in the jaw for it.

"He's a thief, that's wot he is," ses 'Arry; "and I 'ate thiefs. 'Ow's a honest tradesman to make a living when there's people like that about?"

I stood 'im 'arf a pint, and though it hurt 'im awful to drink it, he said 'ed 'ave another, just to see if he could bear the pain. Arter he had 'ad three 'e began for to take a more cheerful view o' life, and told me about a chap that spent three weeks in the London 'Orsepittle for calling 'im a liar.

"Treat me fair," he ses, "and I'll treat other people fair. I never broke my word without a good reason for it, and that's more than everybody can say. If I told you the praise I've 'ad from some people you wouldn't believe it."

I let 'im go on till he 'ad talked 'imself into a good temper, and then I told 'im of the little job I 'ad got for 'im. He listened quiet till I 'ad finished, and then he shook 'is 'ead.

"It ain't in my line," he ses.

"There's 'arf a quid 'anging to it," I ses.

'Arry shook his 'ead agin. "'Tain't enough, mate," he ses. "If you was to make it a quid I won't say as I mightn't think of it."

I 'ad told the skipper that it might cost 'im a quid, so I knew 'ow far I could go; and at last, arter 'Arry 'ad got as far as the door three times, I gave way.

"And I'll 'ave it now," he ses, "to prevent mistakes."

"No, 'Arry," I ses, very firm. "Besides, it ain't my money, you see."

"You mean to say you don't trust me," 'e ses, firing up.

"I'd trust you with untold gold," I ses, "but not with a real quid; you're too fond of a joke, 'Arry."

We 'ad another long argyment about it, and I had to tell 'im plain at last that when I wanted to smell 'is fist, I'd say so.

"You turn up at the wharf at five minutes to seven," I ses, "and I'll give you ten bob of it; arter you've done your business I'll give you the other. Come along quiet, and you'll see me waiting at the gate for you."

He gave way arter a time, and, fust going 'ome for a cup o' tea, I went on to the wharf to tell the skipper 'ow things stood.

"It couldn't 'ave 'appened better," he ses. "Uncle Dick is sure to be aboard at that time, 'cos 'e's going acrost the water at eight o'clock to pay 'er a visit. And all the hands 'll be away. I've made sure of that."

He gave me the money for Artful 'Arry in two 'arf-suverins, and then we went over to the Albion for a quiet glass and a pipe, and to wait for seven o'clock.

I left 'im there at ten minutes to, and at five minutes to, punctual to the minute, I see 'Arry coming along swinging a thick stick with a knob on the end of it.

"Where's the 'arf thick-un?" he ses, looking round to see that the coast was clear.

I gave it to 'im, and arter biting it in three places and saying it was a bit short in weight he dropped it in 'is weskit-pocket and said 'e was ready.

I left 'im there for a minute while I went and 'ad a look round. The deck of the *Snipe* was empty, but I could 'ear Uncle Dick down in the cabin singing; and, arter listening for a few seconds to make sure that it was singing, I went back and beckoned to 'Arry.

"He's down in the cabin," I ses, pointing. "Don't overdo it, 'Arry, and at the same time don't underdo it, as you might say."

"I know just wot you want," ses 'Arry, "and if you'd got the 'art of a man in you, you'd make it *two* quids."

He climbed on board and stood listening for a moment at the companion, and then 'e went down, while I went off outside the gate, so as to be out of earshot in case Uncle Dick called for me. I knew that I should 'ear all about wot went on arterwards—and I did.

Artful 'Arry went down the companion-ladder very quiet, and then stood at the foot of it looking at Uncle Dick. He looked 'im

up and down and all over, and then 'e gave a fierce, loud cough.

"Good evening," he ses.

"Good evening," ses Uncle Dick, staring at 'im. "Did you want to see anybody?"

"I did," ses 'Arry. "I do. And when I see 'im I'm going to put my arms round 'im and twist 'is neck; then I'm going to break every bone in 'is body, and arter that I'm going to shy 'im overboard to pison the fishes with."

"Dear me!" ses Uncle Dick, shifting away as far as 'e could.

"P'r'aps—p'r'aps 'e didn't know," ses Uncle Dick, stammering.

"Didn't know!" ses 'Arry. "Don't care, yer mean. We've got a nice little 'ome, and, just because I've 'ad to leave it a bit and lay low for knifing a man, she takes advantage of it. And it ain't the fust time, neither. Wot's the matter?"

"Touch—touch of ague; I get it sometimes," ses Uncle Dick.

"I want to see this man Finch," ses 'Arry, shaking 'is knobby stick. "Muffit, my name is, and I want to tell 'im so."

"'HE'S DOWN IN THE CABIN,' I SES, POINTING."

"I ain't 'ad a wink o' sleep for two nights," ses 'Arry—"not ever since I 'eard of it. When I think of all I've done for that woman—working for 'er, and such-like—my blood boils. When I think of her passing 'erself off as a widder—my widder—and going out with another man, I don't know wot to do with myself."

Uncle Dick started and turned pale. Fust 'e seemed as if 'e was going to speak, and then 'e thought better of it. He sat staring at 'Arry as if 'e couldn't believe his eyes.

"Wot would you do with a man like that?" ses 'Arry. "I ask you, as man to man, wot would you do to 'im?"

Uncle Dick nearly shook 'imself on to the floor.

"I—I'll go and see if 'e's in the fo'c's'le," he ses at last.

"He ain't there, 'cos I've looked," ses 'Arry, 'arf shutting 'is eyes and looking at 'im hard. "Wot might your name be?"

"My name's Finch," ses Uncle Dick, putting out his 'ands; "but I thought she was a widder. She told me her 'usband died ten years ago; she's deceived me as well as you. I wouldn't ha' dreamt of taking any notice of 'er if I'd known. Truth, I wouldn't. I shouldn't ha' dreamt of such a thing"

Artful 'Arry played with 'is stick a little,

and stood looking at 'im, with a horrible look on 'is face.

"'Ow am I to know you're speaking the truth?" he ses, very slow. "*Eh?* 'Ow can you prove it?"

"If it was the last word I was to speak I'd say the same," ses Uncle Dick. "I tell you, I am as innercent as a new-born babe."

any money in my pocket I'd 'ave a bite while you're gone."

"Why not get something?" ses Uncle Dick, putting his 'and in his pocket, in a great 'urry to please him, and pulling out some silver.

'Arry said 'e would, and then he stood on one side to let 'im pass, and even put the knobby stick under 'im to help 'im up the companion-ladder.

"I TELL YOU, I AM AS INNERCENT AS A NEW-BORN BABE."

"If that's true," ses 'Arry, "she's deceived both of us. Now, if I let you go will you go straight off and bring her 'ere to me?"

"I will," ses Uncle Dick, jumping up.

"Arf a mo," ses 'Arry, holding up 'is stick very quick. "One thing is, if you don't come back, I'll 'ave you another day. I can't make up my mind wot to do. I can't think—I ain't tasted food for two days. If I 'ad

Uncle Dick passed me two minutes arterwards without a word, and set off down the road as fast as 'is little legs 'ud carry 'im. I watched 'im out o' sight, and then I went on board the schooner to see 'ow 'Arry 'ad got on.

"'Arry," I ses, when he 'ad finished, "you're a masterpiece!"

"I know I am," he ses. "Wot about that other 'arf-quid?"

"Here it is," I ses, giving it to 'im. "Fair masterpiece, that's wot you are. They may well call you Artful. Shake 'ands."

I patted 'im on the shoulder arter we 'ad shook 'ands, and we stood there smiling at each other and paying each other compliments.

"Fancy 'em sitting 'ere and waiting for you to come back from that bite," I ses.

"I ought to 'ave 'ad more off of him," ses 'Arry. "'Owever, it can't be helped. I think I'll 'ave a lay down for a bit; I'm tired."

"Better be off," I ses, shaking my 'ead. "Time passes, and they might come back afore you think."

"Well, wot of it?" ses 'Arry.

"*Wot of it?*" I ses. "Why, it 'ud spoil everything. It 'ud be blue ruin."

"Are you sure?" ses 'Arry.

"Sartain," I ses.

"Well, make it five quid, and I'll go then," he ses, sitting down agin.

I couldn't believe my ears at fust, but when I could I drew myself up and told 'im wot I thought of 'im; and he sat there and laughed at me.

"Why, you called me a masterpiece just now," he ses. "I shouldn't be much of a masterpiece if I let a chance like this slip. Why, I shouldn't be able to look myself in the face. Where's the skipper?"

"Sitting in the Albion," I ses, 'arf choking.

"Go and tell 'im it's five quid," ses 'Arry. "I don't mean five more, on'y four. Some people would ha' made it five, but I like to deal square and honest."

I run over for the skipper in a state of mind that don't bear thinking of, and he came back with me, 'arf crazy. When we got to the cabin we found the door was locked, and, arter the skipper 'ad told Artful wot he'd do to 'im if he didn't open it, he 'ad to go on deck and talk to 'im through the skylight.

"If you ain't off of my ship in two twos," he ses, "I'll fetch a policeman."

"You go and fetch four pounds," ses 'Arry; "that's wot I'm waiting for, not a policeman. Didn't the watchman tell you?"

"The bargain was for one pound," ses the skipper, 'ardly able to speak.

"Well, you tell that to the policeman," ses Artful 'Arry.

It was no use, he'd got us every way; and at last the skipper turns out 'is pockets, and he ses, "Look 'ere," he ses, "I've got seventeen and tenpence ha'penny. Will you go if I give you that?"

"'Ow much has the watchman got?" ses 'Arry. "His lodger lost 'is purse the other day."

I'd got two and ninepence, as it 'appened, and then there was more trouble because the skipper wouldn't give 'im the money till he 'ad gone, and 'e wouldn't go till he 'ad got it. The skipper gave way at last, and as soon as he 'ad got it 'Arry ses, "Now 'op off and borrer the rest, and look slippy about it."

I put one hand over the skipper's mouth fust, and then, finding that was no good, I put the other. It was no good wasting bad langwidge on 'Arry.

I pacified the skipper at last, and arter 'Arry 'ad swore true 'e'd go when 'e'd got the money, the skipper rushed round to try and raise it. It's a difficult job at the best o' times, and I sat there on the skylight shivering and wondering whether the skipper or Mrs. Muffit would turn up fust.

Hours seemed to pass away, and then I see the wicket in the gate open, and the skipper come through. He jumped on deck without a word, and then, going over to the skylight, 'anded down the money to 'Arry.

"Right O," ses 'Arry. "It on'y shows you wot you can do by trying."

He unlocked the door and came up on deck, looking at us very careful, and playing with 'is stick.

"You've got your money," ses the skipper; "now go as quick as you can."

'Arry smiled and nodded at him. Then he stepped on to the wharf and was just moving to the gate, with us follering, when the wicket opened and in came Mrs. Muffit and Uncle Dick.

"There he is," ses Uncle Dick. "That's the man!"

Mrs. Muffit walked up to 'im, and my 'art a'most stopped beating. Her face was the colour of beet-root with temper, and you could 'ave heard her breath fifty yards away.

"Ho!" she says, planting 'erself in front of Artful 'Arry, "so you're the man that ses you're my 'usband, are you?"

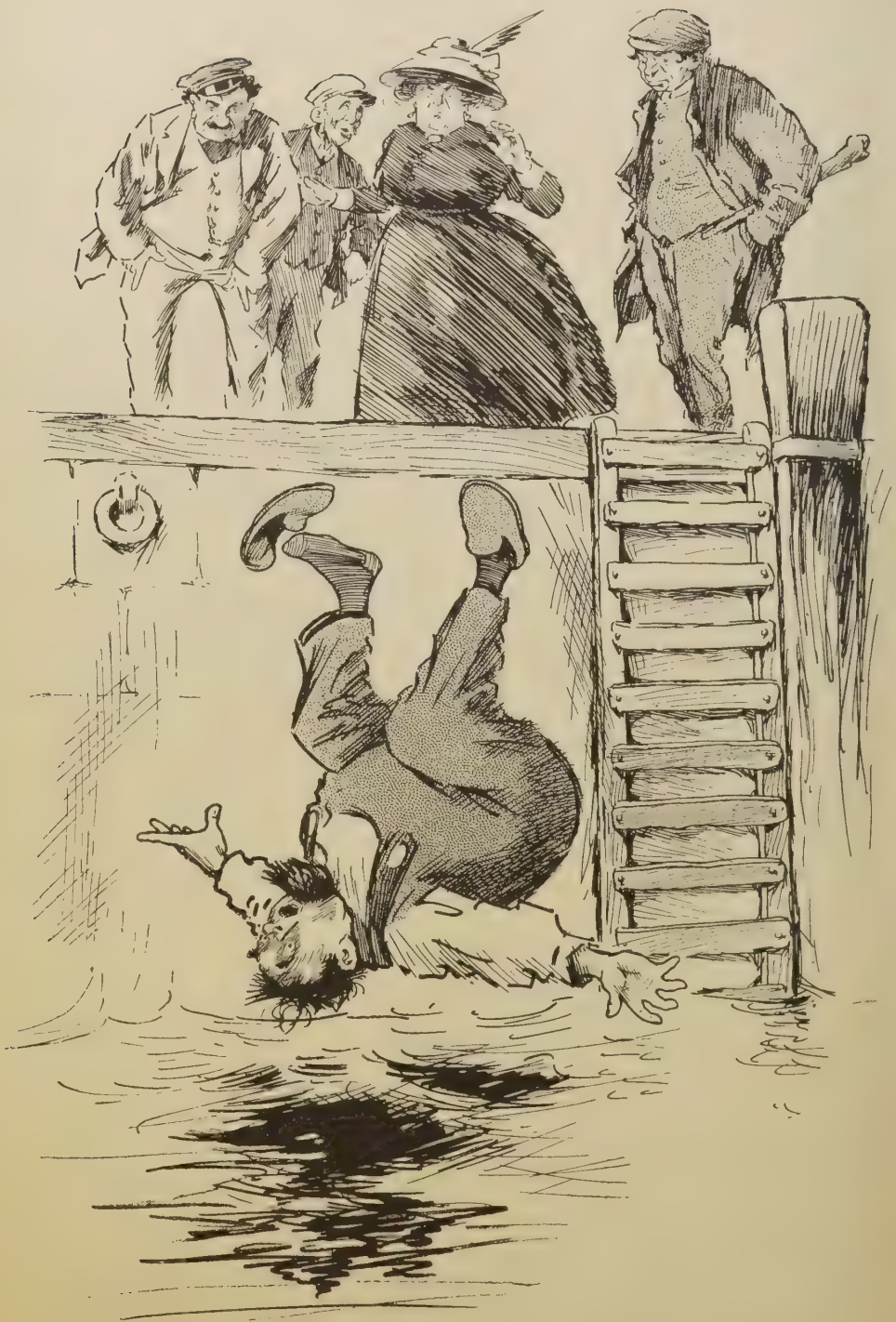
"That's all right," ses 'Arry, "it's all a mistake."

"MISTAKE?" ses Mrs. Muffit.

"Mistake o' Bill's," ses 'Arry, pointing to me. "I told 'im I thought 'e was wrong, but 'e would 'ave it. I've got a bad memory, so I left it to 'im."

"Ho!" ses Mrs. Muffit, taking a deep breath. "Ho! I thought as much. Wot 'ave you got to say for yourself—eh?"

She turned on me like a wild cat, with her 'ands in front of her. I've been scratched once in my life, and I wasn't going to be agin, so, fixing my eyes on 'er, I just stepped back a bit, ready for 'er. So long as I kept my eye



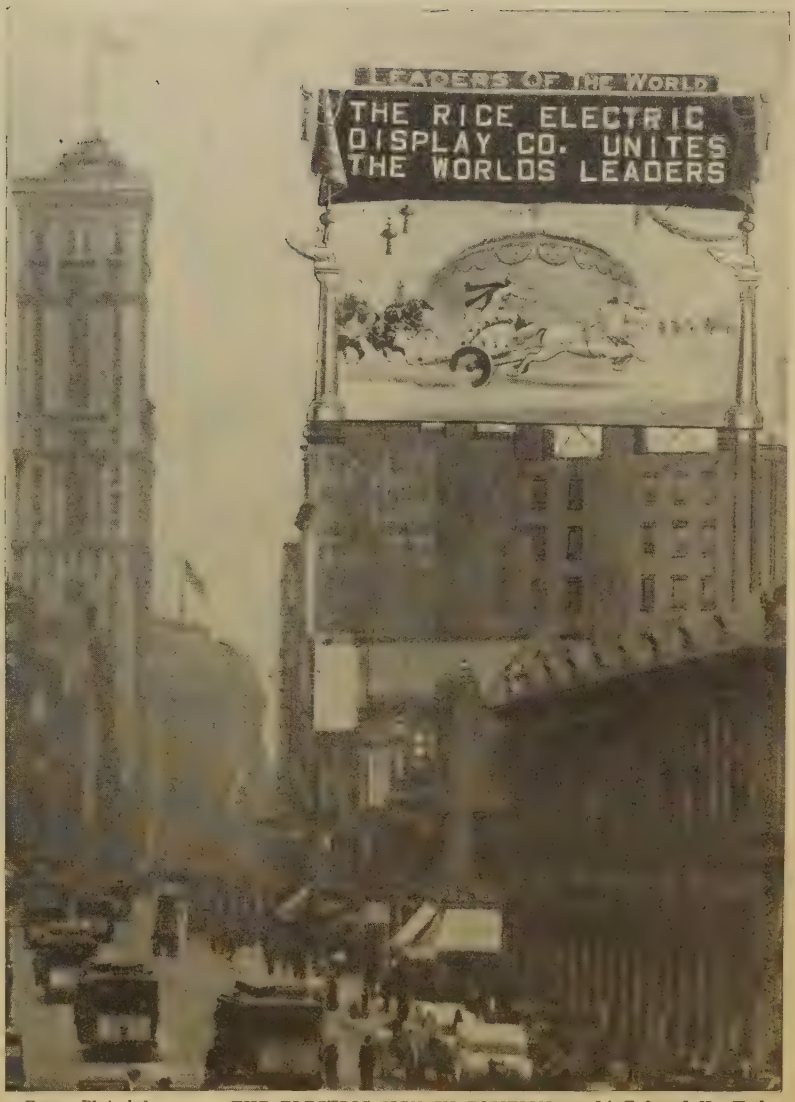
"THE NEXT MOMENT I WENT OVER BACK'ARDS IN TWELVE FOOT OF WATER."

fixed on 'ers she couldn't do anything. I knew that. Unfortunately I stepped back just a inch too far, and next moment I went over back'ards in twelve foot of water.

Arter all, p'r'aps it was the best thing that could have 'appened to me; it stopped her talking. It ain't the fust time I've 'ad a wet jacket; but as for the skipper, and pore Uncle Dick—wot married her—they've been in hot water ever since.

The Most Wonderful Electric Sign in the World.

AND HOW IT IS WORKED.



From a Photo. by] THE ELECTRIC SIGN IN POSITION. *[A. E. Sproul, New York.*

By FRANCIS ARTHUR JONES.

NEW YORK possesses a good many of the "biggest things" in this world, and among them may be reckoned the biggest mechanical electric sign, which is situated at Thirty-Eighth Street and Broadway, on the roof of the Hotel Normandie. It entirely dwarfs every other sign along the famous "Great White Way," rising seventy-two feet above the building on which it is erected. Overlooking the busiest business section of the American metropolis, it is probably seen by a greater number of people during an evening than any other "free show" of the kind in the world.

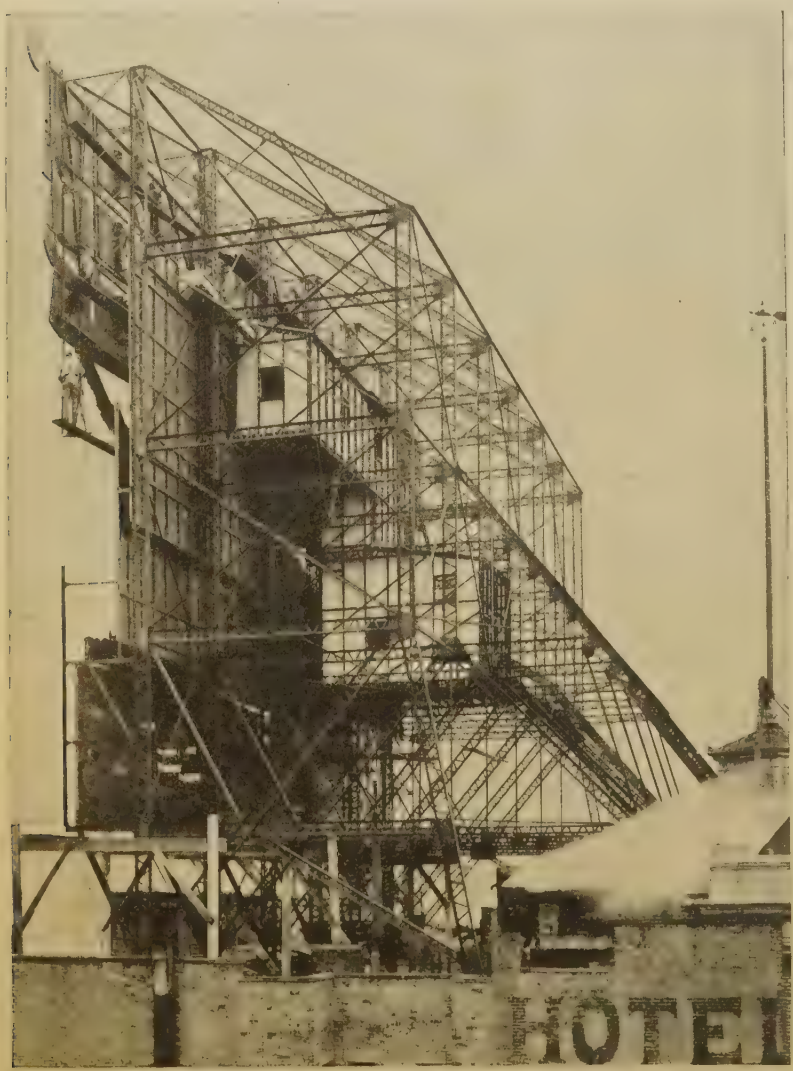
Indeed, when first shown in operation last year the crowds that collected to stare became so great that a special squad of New York's brawniest police had to be told off to handle them. Vehicular traffic was considerably impeded, chains of electric cars were held up, and the "rubber-neck" wagons with their tiers of sight-seers were brought to a standstill. And it was even whispered that the Mayor might take action to have the sign removed.

This remarkable operating "display" repre-

sents a Roman chariot race in incandescent lamps, and is literally a picture of fire of many colours in motion. It is more perfect and natural in its movement than the finest coloured cinematograph picture, and must be seen to be fully appreciated. The photographs reproduced are striking, but from them one can obtain no adequate idea of the perfection of illusion, which, after all, is the real triumph of a mechanical electric display. Many attempts have been made to photograph the chariot race while in motion, but they have invariably failed, owing to the length of time required for the exposure of the plate.

In the race the horses all appear to be running at break-neck speed, yet never overtaking the main chariot. The wheels revolve swiftly, while the road—which is of glass coloured to represent the tan of a race-track—appears to recede from beneath the flying hoofs and revolving wheels. The crimson cape of the leading driver, as well as the manes and tails of the horses, all appear to be waving in the wind, while the lights that decorate the arena seem to move in an opposite direction. On either side, mounted on thirty-five-foot columns, are braziers of fire, sending forth flames over eight feet long. The race takes place for about thirty seconds, then it is in darkness for an equal time, this being repeated from dusk to half an hour after midnight.

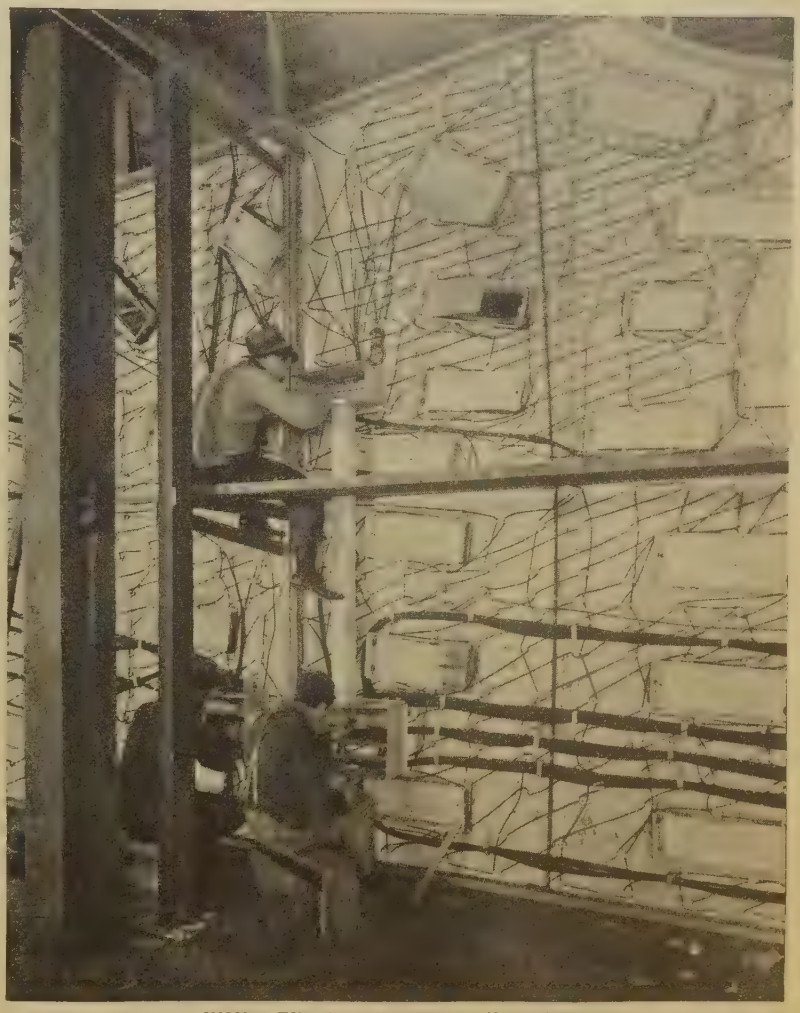
Directly above the race is suspended a great steel curtain, twenty feet high by a hundred feet long—altogether about two thousand square feet of surface. Mounted on the top of this curtain may be seen the words, "Leaders of the World," made entirely of electric bulbs. During the evening there appears continuously on the curtain the announcements of the world's greatest business concerns; the one leading concern in various standard lines of business is shown as the "Recognized Leader of the World." Each announcement appearing on the display is repeated every ten minutes during the entire evening.



THE COLOSSAL STEEL STRUCTURE SUPPORTING THE SIGN.

This colossal and wonderful sign contains twenty thousand electric bulbs—which is at least five times as many as are employed in the next biggest electric display on Broadway. A force equal to six hundred horse-power is required to operate this startling advertisement, while in its construction nearly

a hundred miles of wire were used. There are seventy thousand electric connections and about two thousand seven hundred and fifty electric switches in operation. In order to produce real life-action in fire, the electricity is flashed at the rate of two thousand five hundred flashes per minute. A large force of expert riggers and electricians worked ninety days to complete this mammoth sign, which owes its inception to Mr. Elwood E. Rice, of Dayton, Ohio.



INSIDE THE HOUSE BEHIND THE SIGN.

If the reader will examine the photograph of the steel structure erected for the support and operation of the sign—which is seventy-two feet high and weighs sixty tons—he will notice that enclosed in the network of bars is a three-storey house, which many a well-to-do tradesman might reasonably covet for his own. This house contains several rooms or compartments, in which are stored the various devices used to operate the sign. Three men are in constant attendance in this strange house, for, though the action of the display is automatic, the mechanism has to be as carefully watched as the machinery of an Atlantic liner.

In addition to these three men a fourth is stationed at the open window of the office of the Rice Electric Display Company, which is situated some considerable distance from the sign, though in direct line of vision. This man also remains at his post during the time that the display is in operation. He is armed with a powerful pair of field-glasses, and with these he scans the sign with as much care and anxiety as though he were a shipwrecked mariner "looking for a sail." On a table beside him is a chart or plan of the sign, on which every globe is marked, and it is his duty to indicate on the chart each globe which, with the help of his field-glasses, he notices has become useless. The next morning the burnt-out globes are replaced by new ones. It might be supposed that during a single night not more than a dozen or so of globes would burn out; but this is far from being the case, as many as a hundred and fifty or two hundred globes becoming useless through the short time which elapses between sunset and midnight. During the year it is estimated that the twenty thousand globes which are contained in the display have to be renewed three times over, and this can well be understood when the vast amount of electric wiring is taken into consideration. In electric globes alone this monster sign

costs many hundreds of pounds a year to maintain.

The origin of this "Leaders of the World" sign is an interesting one. Three or four years ago Mr. Elwood E. Rice—an enterprising young American—conceived the possibility of erecting an electric-light sign which should eclipse all other display advertisements put together. It should also possess a *permanent* value, and thus differ again from those ordinary signs which must be changed every few weeks in order to retain the attention of the public. Furthermore, the sign should only advertise "the world's greatest business concerns"—each in its way being a "leader." At the time he had no very clear idea in his head as to the picture that would best illustrate his meaning, and then one day came, like a flash, the idea of a Roman chariot-race. It was an inspiration, for surely nothing was better suited to indicate "leadership" than the famous arena races of gladiator days!

A NEAR VIEW OF THE CHARIOT, WHICH WILL CARRY TWENTY-FIVE PEOPLE.

No sooner had the idea suggested itself than Mr. Rice commissioned a number of artists to submit paintings of a chariot-race, bearing in mind that it should be of such a nature as to lend itself to being carried out mechanically and put into operation by the flashing of lights. A great many designs were sent in, but for some cause or another all had to be rejected. Some were too elaborate, some were incapable of mechanical construction. Mr. Rice himself assisted in the design that was ultimately chosen, which, while being dignified and simple, yet indicated everything necessary to thrill the beholder. The illusion of the horses apparently tearing along at their utmost speed is created by the lights flashing at the incredible rate of forty flashes a second. This, of course, is faster than the eye can follow, which renders the movements visionally perfect.

Immediately the design was selected it was submitted to a committee of expert electricians, who passed judgment upon it and unanimously agreed that the picture was one which might successfully be carried out literally in "living fire." The work was next placed in the hands of a small army of expert riggers and electricians, who, after innumerable experiments, completed the task within three months. All the work was carried out in Dayton, Ohio, the parts then being transported to New York in eight railroad cars.

The leading chariot was so large that it required a railroad car to itself, and even then it was a tight fit. Had this been an actual chariot, and not one more or less in "relief," it would have held twenty-five people comfortably, and thirty if the occupants were "well acquainted." The chariot follows the design of the famous chariots of Roman days, the front and sides being lavishly decorated with roses and other flowers. When the current is turned on this chariot actually seems to sway as the horses tear along. Although the near wheel does not actually turn, the flashing of the lights is so rapid that no observer could say with certainty that the wheel does not revolve.

In a remarkably short time the different parts were assembled on the roof of the Hotel Normandie and the sign erected, the opera-

A THIRTY-FIVE-FOOT COLUMN SURMOUNTED BY AN EIGHT-FOOT FLAME.

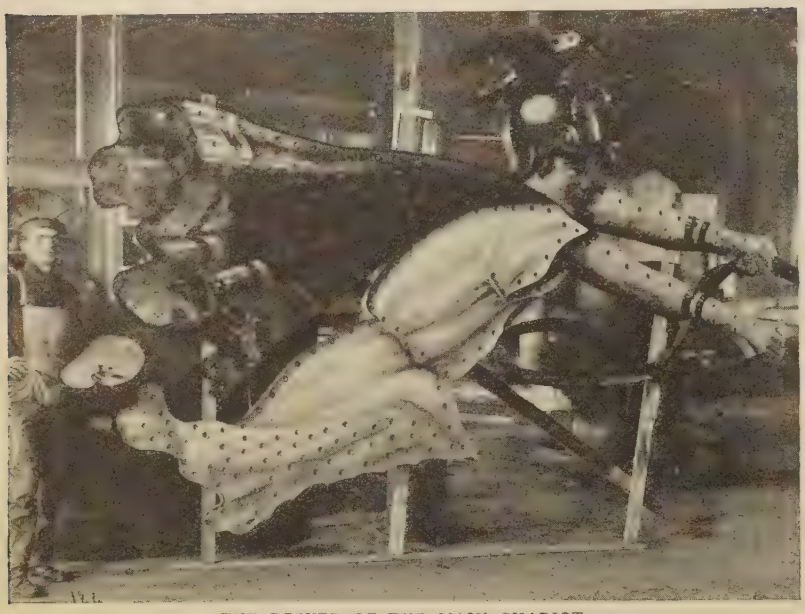
tion being closely watched by many thousands of interested spectators daily. And, in spite of there being over seventy thousand electric connections, the work was so perfectly carried out that the display proved a success from the start, the first performance of the now famous "Roman Chariot-Race" drawing a roar of approval from the throats of the twenty thousand people gathered together to witness the event.

The great steel curtain which surmounts the picture proper, and which has already been referred to, is sufficiently large to allow of the display of fifty-four letters, each letter being four feet in height. The lettering on this curtain is perfectly plain, and therefore does not in any way mar the beauty of the display. The different announcements are shown on the curtain every few minutes, and can be changed by cable or telegraph if necessary. Should a firm desire any alteration in the wording of an advertisement, the change can be made the same evening by giving notice to the operators an hour and a half before sunset.

The actual sizes of some of the principal features in this "Leaders of the World" advertisement are sufficiently remarkable to warrant a little attention. We have already referred to the carrying capacity of the leading chariot, and to the fact that the columns which stand on either side of the arena, and add so vastly to the dignity of the picture, are thirty-five feet in height. The braziers on the summit of these columns are detachable, and the "flames" are so realistic that they must be seen to be believed.

If our readers will glance at the sign which forms the heading to this article they will note two or three tassels, which the artist has inserted in order to give a finish to the

AN EIGHT-FOOT TASSEL.



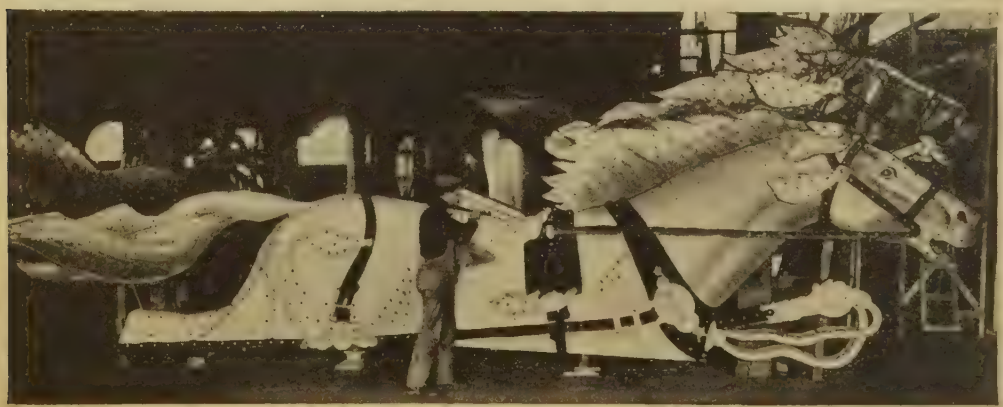
THE DRIVER OF THE MAIN CHARIOT.

picture. These tassels do not appear to be of any great size, though when detached from the display and brought to the ground they assume colossal proportions. Some idea of the actual size of one of these tassels may be gathered from the photograph, which was made during illumination and which is reproduced on page 447. The faint outline of a man standing at the right of the tassel may be seen, and helps to make this particular feature a startling one. The smallest of these tassels is eight feet in length and about four feet broad at the widest part.

Then consider the magnitude of the driver of the main chariot! How adequately might he alone have "kept the bridge," for he is no less than five times as big as an ordinary man. His helmet is large enough for half-a-dozen firemen, while the bird which surmounts it is equally huge in proportion. His white tunic and crimson cloak are the biggest garments ever constructed in solid steel, and the manner in which they appear to flutter in the breeze is a marvel of electrical engineering.

And the horses! Each is thirty-five feet long, so that if they were put on their hind legs they would reach to exactly the same height as the columns. They are splendidly sculptured, and there is fire in the eye of each, which suggests a fight to the last. Manes, tails, ears, and harness are literally riddled with small holes, in each one of which is an electric light which flashes at such a tremendous rate that it is impossible for the human eye to detect anything mechanical in the movement.

The "Leaders of the World" display has now been in operation about eighteen months, and still holds its own as the most remarkable electric sign ever erected. It cost fifty thousand pounds to complete, and as an advertising device it probably brings in more revenue than all the other electric signs on Broadway put together.



THE HORSES OF THE MAIN CHARIOT.

Judith Lee: Pages from Her Life.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by J. R. Skelton.

[Judith Lee, as readers of the previous stories are already aware, is a teacher of the deaf and dumb by the oral system, and therefore the fortunate possessor of the gift of reading words as they issue from people's lips, a gift which gives her a place apart in fiction.]

III.—Conscience.

I HAD been spending a few days at Brighton, and was sitting one morning on the balcony of the West Pier pavilion, listening to the fine band of the Gordon Highlanders. The weather was beautiful—the kind one sometimes does get at Brighton—blue skies, a warm sun, and just that touch in the soft breeze which serves as a pick-me-up. There were crowds of people. I sat on one end of a bench. In a corner, within a few feet of me, a man was standing, leaning with his back against the railing—an odd-looking man, tall, slender, with something almost Mongolian in his clean-shaven, round face. I had noticed him on that particular spot each time I had been on the pier. He was well tailored, and that morning, for the first time, he wore a flower in his buttonhole. As one sometimes does when one sees an unusual-looking stranger, I wondered hazily what kind of person he might be. I did not like the look of him.

Presently another man came along the balcony and paused close to him. They took no notice of each other; the new-comer looked attentively at the crowd promenading on the deck below, almost ostentatiously disregarding the other's neighbourhood. All the same, the man in the corner whispered something which probably reached his ears alone—and my perception—something which seemed to be a few disconnected words:—

"Mauve dress, big black velvet hat, ostrich plume; four-thirty train."

That was all he said. I do not suppose that anyone there, except the man who had paused and the lazy-looking girl whose eyes had chanced for a moment to wander towards his lips had any notion that he had spoken at all. The new-comer remained for a few moments idly watching the promenaders; then, turning, without vouchsafing the other the slightest sign of recognition, strolled carelessly on.

It struck me as rather an odd little scene. I was constantly being made an unintentional confidante of what were meant to be secrets; but about that brief sentence which the one had whispered to the other there was a piquant something which struck me as amusing—the more especially as I believed I had seen the lady to whom the words referred. As I came on the pier I had been struck by her gorgeous appearance, as being a person who probably had more money than taste.

Some minutes passed. The Mongolian-looking man remained perfectly quiescent in his corner. Then another man came strolling along—big and burly, in a reddish-brown suit, a green felt hat worn slightly on one side of his head. He paused on the same spot on which the first man had brought his stroll to a close, and he paid no attention to the gentleman in the corner, who looked right away from him, even while I could see his lips framing precisely the same sentence:—

"Mauve dress, big black velvet hat, ostrich plume; four-thirty train."

The big man showed by no sign that he had heard a sound. He continued to do as his predecessor had done—stared at the promenaders, then strolled carelessly on.

This second episode struck me as being rather odder than the first. Why were such commonplace words uttered in so mysterious a manner? Would a third man come along? I waited to see—and waited in vain. The band played "God Save the King," the people rose, but no third man had appeared. I left the Mongolian-looking gentleman still in his corner and went to the other side of the balcony to watch the people going down the pier. I saw the gorgeous lady in the mauve dress and big black picture hat with a fine ostrich plume, and I wondered what interest she might have for the round-faced man in the corner, and what she had to do with the four-thirty train. She was with two or three equally gorgeous ladies and one or two wonderfully-attired men; they seemed to be quite a party.

The next day I left Brighton by an early

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"PRESENTLY ANOTHER MAN CAME ALONG THE BALCONY AND PAUSED CLOSE TO HIM."

train. In the compartment I was reading the *Sussex Daily News*, when a paragraph caught my eye. "Tragic Occurrence on the Brighton Line." Late the night before the body of a woman had been found lying on the ballast, as if she might have fallen out of a passing train. It described her costume—she was attired in a pale mauve dress and a big black picture hat in which was an ostrich-feather plume. There were other details—plenty of them—but that was enough for me.

When I read that and thought of the man leaning against the railing I rather caught my breath. Two young men who were facing each other at the other end of the compartment began to talk about the paragraph in tones which were audible to all.

"Do you see that about the lady in the mauve dress who was found on the line? Do you know, I shouldn't wonder a bit if it was Mrs. Farningham—that's her rig-out to a T. And I know she was going up to town yesterday afternoon."

"She did go," replied the other; "and I'm told that when she started she'd had about enough cold tea."

The other grinned—a grin of comprehension.

"If that's so I shouldn't wonder if the poor dear opened the carriage door, thinking it was some other door, and stepped out on to the line. From all I hear, it seems that she was quite capable of doing that sort of thing when she was like that."

"Oh, quite; not a doubt of it. And she was capable of some pretty queer things when she wasn't like that."

I wondered; these young gentlemen

might be right; still, the more I thought the more I wondered.

I was very much occupied just then. It was because I had nearly broken down in my work that I had gone for those few days to Brighton. I doubt if I even glanced at a newspaper for some considerable time after that. I cannot say that the episode wholly faded from my memory, but I never heard what was the sequel of the lady who was found on the line, or, indeed, anything more about her.

I accepted an engagement with a deaf and dumb girl who was about to travel with her parents on a long voyage, pretty nearly round the world. I was to meet them in Paris, and then go on with them to Marseilles, where the real journey commenced. The night before I started some friends gave me a sort of send-off dinner at the Embankment Hotel. We were about half-way through the meal when a man came in and sat by himself at a small round table, nearly facing me. I could not think where I had seen him before. I was puzzling my brain when a second man came across the room and strolled slowly by his table. He did not pause, nor did either allow a sign to escape him to show that they were acquaintances, yet I distinctly saw the lips of the man who was seated at the table frame about a dozen words :—

"White dress, star in her hair, pink roses over left breast. To-night."

The stroller went carelessly on, and for a moment my heart seemed to stand still. It all came back to me—the pier, the band of the Gordon Highlanders, the man with his back against the railings, the words whispered to the two men who had paused beside him. The diner in front of me was the Mongolian-looking man; I should have recognized him at once had not evening dress wrought such a change in him. That whispered sentence made assurance doubly sure. The party with whom I was dining had themselves been struck by the appearance of the lady in the white frock, with the diamond star in her hair and the pink roses arranged so daintily in the corsage of her dress. There had been a laughing discussion about who was the nicest-looking person in the room; more than one opinion had supported the claim of the lady with the diamond star.

In the middle of that dinner I found myself all at once in a quandary, owing to that very inconvenient gift of mine. I recalled the whisper about the lady in the mauve dress, and how the very next day the body of a lady so attired had been found on the Brighton line. Was the whispered allusion to the lady in the white dress to have a similar unpleasant sequel? If there was fear of anything of the kind, what was I to do?

My friends, noticing my abstraction, rallied me on my inattention.

"May I point out to you," observed my neighbour, "that the waiter is offering you asparagus, and has been doing so for about five minutes?"

Looking round, I found that the waiter was standing patiently at my side. I allowed him to help me. I was about to eat what he had given me when I saw someone advancing across the room whom I knew at once, in spite of the alteration which evening dress made in him—it was the big, burly man in the red-brown suit.

The comedy—if it were a comedy—was repeated. The big man, not, apparently, acknowledging the existence of the solitary diner, passed his table, seemingly by the merest chance, in the course of his passage towards another on the other side of the room. With a morsel of food on his fork poised midway between the plate and his mouth, the diner moved his lips to repeat his former words :—

"White dress, star in her hair, pink roses over left breast. To-night."

The big man had passed, the morsel of food had entered the diner's mouth; nothing seemed to have happened, yet I was on the point of springing to my feet and electrifying the gaily-dressed crowd by crying, "Murder!"

More than once afterwards I wished I had done so. I do not know what would have happened if I had; I have sometimes asked myself if I could say what would *not* have happened. As a matter of fact, I did nothing at all. I do not say it to excuse myself, nor to blame anyone, but it seemed to me, at the moment, that to do anything was impossible, because those with whom I was dining made it so. I was their guest; they took care to make me understand that I owed them something as my hosts. They were in the merriest mood themselves; they seemed to regard it as of the first importance that I should be merry too. To the best of my ability I was outwardly as gay as the rest of them. The lady in the white dress, with her party, left early. I should have liked to give her some hint, some warning—I did neither; I just let her go. As she went across the room one or two members of our party toasted her under their breath. The solitary diner took no heed of her whatever. I had been furtively watching him the whole time, and he never once

"I COULD NOT THINK WHERE I HAD SEEN HIM BEFORE."

glanced in her direction. So far as I saw, he was so absorbed in his meal that he scarcely raised his eyes from the table. I knew, unfortunately, that I could not have mistaken the words which I had seen his lips forming. I tried to comfort myself with the reflection that they could not have referred to the vision of feminine loveliness which had just passed from the room.

The following morning I travelled by the early boat-train to Dover. When the train had left the station I looked at my *Telegraph*, I read a good deal of it; then, at the top of a column on one of the inside pages, I came upon a paragraph headed: "Mysterious Affair at the Embankment Hotel." Not very long after midnight—in time, it seemed, to reach the paper before it went to press—the body of a young woman had been found in the courtyard of the hotel. She was in her night attire. She was recognized as one of the guests who had been staying in the hotel; she had either fallen or been thrown out of her bedroom window.

Something happened to my brain so that I was unconscious of the train, in which I was a passenger, as it sped onwards.

What did that paragraph mean? Could the woman who had been found in her night attire in the courtyard of the Embankment Hotel be the woman who had worn the white dress and a diamond star in her pretty brown hair? There was nothing to show that she was. There was nothing to connect that lightly-clothed body with the whispered words of the solitary diner, with a touch of the Mongol in his face; yet I wondered if it were not my duty to return at once to London and tell my story. But, after all, it was such a silly story; it amounted to nothing; it proved nothing. Those people were waiting for me in Paris; I could not desert them at the last moment, with all our passages booked, for what might turn out to be something even more fantastic than a will-o'-the-wisp.

So I went on to Paris, and, with them, nearly round the world; and I can say, without exaggeration, that more than once that curious-looking gentleman's face seemed to have gone with me. Once, in an English paper which I picked up after we had landed at Hong-Kong, I read about the body of a woman which had been found on the Great Western Railway line near Exeter station—and I wondered. When I went out into the streets and saw on the faces of the people who thronged them something which recalled the solitary diner at the Embankment Hotel—I wondered still more.

More than two years elapsed. In the summer of the third I went to Buxton, as I had gone to Brighton, for a rest. I was seated one morning in the public gardens, with my thoughts on the other side of the world—we had not long returned from the Sandwich Islands—and I was comparing that land of perpetual summer with the crisp freshness of the Buxton air. With my thoughts still far away, my eyes passed idly from face to face of those around me, until presently I became aware that under the shade of a tree on my left a man was sitting alone. When I saw his face my thoughts came back with a rush; it was the man who had been on the pier at Brighton, and at the Embankment Hotel, and who had travelled with me round the world. The consciousness of his near neighbourhood gave me a nasty jar; as at the Embankment Hotel there was an impulsive moment when I felt like jumping on to my feet and denouncing him to the assembled crowd. He was dressed in a cool grey suit; as at Brighton, he had a flower in his buttonhole; he sat upright and impassive, glancing neither to the left nor right, as if nothing was of interest to him.

Then the familiar comedy, which I believe I had rehearsed in my dreams, began again. A man came down the path from behind me, passing before I had seen his face, and under the shady tree paused for an instant to light a cigarette, and I saw the lips of the man on the chair forming words:—

"Grey dress, lace scarf, Panama hat; five-five train."

His lips framed those nine words only; then the man with the cigarette passed on, and I really do believe that my heart stood still. Comedy? I had an uncomfortable conviction that this was a tragedy which was being played—in the midst of that light-hearted crowd, in that pleasant garden, under those laughing skies. I waited for the action to continue—not very long. In the distance I saw a big, burly person threading his way among the people towards that shady tree, and I knew what was coming. He did not pause even for a single instant, he just went slowly by, within a foot of the chair, and the thin lips shaped themselves into words:—

"Grey dress, lace scarf, Panama hat; five-five train."

The big man sauntered on, leaving me with the most uncomfortable feeling that I had seen sentence of death pronounced on an innocent, helpless fellow-creature. I did not propose to sit still this time and allow those three uncanny beings, undisturbed, to work their evil wills. As at the hotel, the question recurred to me—what was I to do? Was I to go up and denounce this creature to his face? Suppose he chose to regard me as some ill-conducted person, what evidence had I to adduce that any statements I might make were true? I decided, in the first place, to leave him severely alone; I had thought of another plan.

Getting up from my chair I began to walk about the gardens. As had not been the case on the two previous occasions, there was no person in sight who answered to the description—"Grey dress, lace scarf, Panama hat." I was just about to conclude that this time the victim was not in plain view, when I saw a Panama hat in the crowd on the other side of the band. I moved quickly forward; it was certainly on a woman's head. There was a lace scarf spread out upon her shoulders, a frock of a very light shade in grey. Was this the woman whose doom had been pronounced? I went more forward still, and, with an unpleasant sense of shock, recognized the wearer,

I was staying at the Empire Hotel. On the previous afternoon, at tea-time, the lounge had been very full. I saw a tall lady, who seemed to be alone, glancing about as if looking for an empty table. As she seemed to have some difficulty in finding one, and as I had a table all to myself, I suggested, as she came near, that she should have a seat at mine. The manner in which she received my suggestion took me aback. I suppose there are no ruder, more ill-bred creatures in the world than some English women. Whether she thought I wished to force my company upon her and somehow scrape an acquaintance I cannot say. She could not have treated my suggestion with more contemptuous scorn had I tried to pick her pocket. She just looked down at me, as if wondering what kind of person I could be that I had dared to speak to her at all, and then, without condescending to reply, went on. I almost felt as if she had given me a slap across my face.

After dinner I saw her again in the lounge. She wore some very fine jewellery—she was a very striking woman, beautifully gowned. A diamond brooch was pinned to her bodice. As she approached I saw it was unfastened; it fell within a foot of where I was sitting. I picked it up and offered it to her, with the usual formula.

"I think this is your brooch—you have just dropped it."

How do you think she thanked me? She hesitated a second to take the brooch, as if she thought I might be playing her some trick. Then, when she saw that it was hers, she took it and looked it carefully over—and what do you suppose she said?

"You are very insistent."

That was all, every word—in such ineffable tones! She was apparently under the impression that I had engineered the dropping of that diamond brooch as a further step in my nefarious scheme to force on her the dishonour of my acquaintance.

This was the lady who in the public gardens was wearing a light grey dress, a lace scarf, and a Panama hat. What would she say to me if I told her about the man under the shady tree and his two friends? Yet, if I did not tell her, should I not feel responsible for whatever might ensue? That she went in danger of her life I was as sure as that I was standing there. She might be a very unpleasant, a very foolish woman, yet I could not stand by and allow her quite possibly to be done to death, without at least warning her of the danger which she ran. The sooner the warning was given the better. As she turned into a side path I turned into another, meaning to meet her in the centre of hers and warn her there and then.

The meeting took place, and, as I had more than half expected, I entirely failed to do what I had intended. The glance she fixed on me when she saw me coming and recognized who I was conveyed sufficient information. It said, as plainly as if in so many words, that if I dared to insult her by attempting to address her it would be at my own proper peril. None the less, I did dare. I remembered the woman in the mauve dress, and the woman in the white, and the feeling I had had that by the utterance of a few words I might have saved their lives. I was going to do my best to save hers, even though she tried to freeze me while I was in the act of doing so.

We met. As if scenting my design, as we neared each other she quickened her pace to stride right past. But I was too quick for her; I barred the way. The expression with which, as she recognized my intention, she regarded me! But I was not to be frightened into dumbness.

"There is something I have to say to you which is important—of the very first importance—which it is essential that I should say and you should hear. I have not the least intention of forcing on you my acquaintance, but with your sanction——"

I got as far as that, but I got no farther. As I still continued to bar her path, she turned right round and marched in the other direction. I might have gone after her, I might have stopped her—I did move a step or two; but when I did she spoke to me over her shoulder as she was moving:—

"If you dare to speak to me again I shall claim the protection of the police, so be advised."

I was advised. Whether the woman suffered from some obscure form of mental disease or not I could not say; or with what majesty she supposed herself to be hedged around, which made it the height of presumption for a mere outsider to venture to address her—that also was a mystery to me. As I had no wish to have a scene in the public gardens, and as it appeared that there would be a scene if I did any more to try to help her, I let her go.

I saw her leave the gardens, and when I had seen that I strolled back. There, under the shady tree, still sat the man with the touch of the Mongol in his face.

After luncheon, which I took at the hotel, I had a surprise. There, in the hall, was my

gentleman, going through the front door. I spoke to the hall porter.

"Is that gentleman staying in the house?" The porter intimated that he was. "Can you tell me what his name is?" The porter answered promptly, perhaps because it was such an unusual name:—

"Mr. John Tung." Then he added, with a smile, "I used to be in the Navy. When we were on the China station I was always meeting people with names like that—this gentleman is the first I've met since."

An idea occurred to me. I felt responsible for that woman, in spite of her stupidity. If anything happened to her it would lie at my door. For my own sake I did not propose to run the risk. I went to the post-office and I sent a telegram to John Tung, Empire Hotel. The clerk on the other side of the counter seemed rather surprised as he read the words which I wished him to wire.

"I suppose this is all right?" he questioned, as if in doubt.

"Perfectly all right," I replied. "Please send that telegram at once."

I quitted the office, leaving that telegraph clerk scanning my message as if he were still in doubt if it was in order. In the course of the afternoon I had another idea. I wrote what follows on a sheet of paper.

"You threw the woman in the mauve dress on to the Brighton line; you were responsible for the death of the woman in the white dress at the Embankment Hotel; you killed the woman who was found on the Great Western line near Exeter station; but you are going to do no mischief to the woman in the grey dress and the lace scarf and the Panama hat, who is going up to town by the five-five.

"Be sure of that.

"Also you may be sure that the day of reckoning is at hand, when you and your two accomplices will be called to a strict account. In that hour you will be shown no more mercy than you have shown.

"That is as certain as that, at the present moment, you are still alive. But the messengers of justice are drawing near."

There was no beginning and no ending, no date, no address—I just wrote that and left it so. It was wild language, in which I took a good deal for granted that I had no right to take; and it savoured a good deal of melodrama and highfalutin. But then, my whole scheme was a wild-cat scheme; if it succeeded it would be because of that, as it were, very wild-cat property. I put my sheet of paper into an envelope, and I wrote outside it in very large, plain letters, "Mr. John Tung." Then I went into the lounge of the hotel for tea—and I waited.

And I kept on waiting for quite a considerable time. It was rather early for tea, but as time passed and people began to gather together, and there were still no signs of the persons whose presence I particularly desired, I began to fidget. If none of them appeared I should have to reconsider my plan of campaign. I was just on the point of concluding that the moment had come when I had better think of something else, when I saw Mr. John Tung standing in the doorway and with him his two acquaintances. This was better than I had expected. Their appearance together in the public room of the hotel suggested all sorts of possibilities to my mind.

I had that missive prepared. I waited until I had some notion of the quarter of the room in which they proposed to establish themselves, then I rose from my chair and, crossing to the other side of the lounge, left on a table close to that at which they were about to sit—I hoped unnoticed—the envelope on which "Mr. John Tung" was so plainly written. Then I watched for the march of events.

What I had hoped would occur did happen. A waiter, bustling towards the new-comers, saw the envelope lying on a vacant table, picked it up, perceived that it was addressed to Mr. John Tung, and bore it to that gentleman. I could not hear, but I saw what was said. The waiter began:—

"Is this your letter, sir?"

Mr. Tung glanced, as if surprised, at the envelope which the man was holding, then took it from between his fingers and stared at it hard.

"Where did you get this?" he asked.

"It was on that table, sir."

"What table?"

"The one over there, sir."

Mr. Tung looked in the direction in which the man was pointing, as if not quite certain what he meant.

"How came it to be there? Who put it there?"

"Can't say, sir. I saw an envelope lying on the table as I was coming to you, and when I saw your name on it I thought it might be yours. Tea, sir?"

"Tea for three, and bring some buttered toast."

The waiter went. Mr. Tung remained staring at the envelope as if there were something in its appearance which he found a little puzzling. One of his companions

spoke to him; but as his back was towards me I could not see what he said—I could guess from the other's answer.

"Some rubbish; a circular, I suppose—the sort of thing one does get in hotels."

Then he opened the envelope, and—I had rather a funny feeling. I was perfectly conscious that from the point of view of a court of law I had not the slightest right to pen a single one of the words which were on the sheet of paper inside that envelope. For all I could prove, Mr. Tung and his friends might be the most innocent of men. I might find it pretty hard to prove that the Mongolian-looking gentleman had whispered either of the brief, jerky sentences which I had seen him whisper; and, even if I could get as far as that, there still remained the difficulty of showing that they bore anything like the construction which I had put upon them. If I had misjudged him, if my deductions had been wrong, then Mr. Tung, when he found what was in that envelope, would be more than justified in making a fine to-do. It was quite possible, since I could not have eyes at the back of my head, that someone had seen me leave that envelope on the table, in which case my authorship might be traced, and I should be in a pretty awkward situation. That woman in the grey dress would be shown to have had right on her side when she declined, with such a show of scorn, to allow me even to speak to her. So, while Mr. Tung was tearing open the envelope and taking out the sheet of paper, I had some distinctly uncomfortable moments. Suppose I had wronged him—what was I to do? Own up, make a clean breast of it—or run away?

I had not yet found an answer when I became perfectly certain that none was required. My chance shot had struck him like a bombshell; the change which took place in his countenance when he began to read what was written on that piece of paper was really curious. I should have said he had a visage over whose muscles he exercised great control—Mongols have as a rule. But those words of mine were so wholly unexpected that when he first saw them his expression was, on the instant, one of stunned amazement. He glanced at the opening words, then, dropping his hands to his sides, gazed round the room, as if he were wondering if there were anyone there who could have written them. Then he raised the sheet of paper again and read farther. And, as he read, his breath seemed to come quicker, his eyes dilated, the colour left his cheeks, his jaw dropped open. He presented a unique picture of the surprise which is born of terror.

His companions, looking at him, were affected as he was, without knowing why. The big, burly man leaned towards him; I saw him mutter:—

"You look as if you'd had a stroke. What's the matter? What's that you've got there? Don't look like that. Everyone is staring at you. What's up?"

Mr. Tung did not reply; he looked at the speaker, then at the sheet of paper—that time I am sure he did not see what was on it. Then he crumpled the sheet of paper up in his hand, and without a word strode across the lounge into the hall beyond. His two companions looked after him in bewildered amazement; then they went also, not quite so fast as he had done, but fast enough. And all the people in the lounge looked at each other. The manner of the exit of these three gentlemen had created a small sensation.

My little experiment had succeeded altogether beyond my anticipation. It was plain that I had not misjudged this gentleman. It would be difficult to find a more striking illustration than that presented by Mr. John Tung of the awful accusing conscience which strikes terror into a man's soul. I could not afford to let my acquaintance with these three interesting gentlemen cease at this moment; the woman in the grey dress must still not be left to their tender mercies.

After what seemed to me to be a sufficient interval, I left my tea and went after them into the hall. I was just in time. The three men were in the act of leaving the hotel. As they were moving towards the door a page came up, an official envelope in his hand.

"Mr. John Tung? A telegram for you, sir."

Mr. Tung took it as if it were some dangerous thing, hesitated, glanced at the men beside him, tore it open, read what was on the flimsy sheet of pink paper, and walked so quickly out of the building that his gait almost approached a run. His companions went after him as if they were giving chase. My wire had finished what those few plain words on the sheet of paper had begun.

I was lingering in the hall, rather at a loss as to what was the next step that I had better take, when the woman in the grey dress came out of the lift, which had just descended. A cab was at the door, on which was luggage. Although she must have seen me very clearly, she did not recognize my presence, but passed straight out to the cab. She was going up to London by the five-five train.

I no longer hesitated what to do. I, too,

quitted the hotel and got into a cab. It still wanted ten minutes to five when I reached the station. The train was standing by the platform; the grey-frocked lady was superintending the labelling of her luggage—apparently she had no maid. She was escorted by a porter, who had her luggage in charge, to a first-class carriage. On the top of her luggage was the tell-tale thing which has probably done more harm than good—the dressing-bag which is so dear to the hearts of many women, which ostentatiously proclaims the fact that it contains their jewels, probably their money, all that they are travelling with which they value most. One has only to get hold of the average travelling woman's dressing-bag to become possessed of all that she has—from the practical thief's point of view—worth taking—all contained in one portable and convenient package.

At the open door of the compartment next to the one to which the porter ushered her, the big, burly man was standing—rather to my surprise. I thought I had startled him more than that. Presently who should come strolling up but his more slightly built acquaintance. Apparently he did not know him now; he passed into the compartment at whose door he was standing, without a nod or sign of greeting. My glance travelling down the platform, I saw that standing outside a compartment only a few doors off was Mr. John Tung.

This did not suit me at all. I did not propose that those three gentlemen should travel with the grey-frocked lady by the five-five train to town. Rather than that I would have called in the aid of the police, though it would have been a very queer tale that I should have had to tell them. Perhaps fortunately, I hit upon what the old-time cookery books used to call "another way." I had done so well with one unexpected message that I thought I would try another. There were ten minutes before the train started—still time.

"HE PRESENTED A UNIQUE PICTURE OF THE SURPRISE WHICH IS BORN OF TERROR."

I rushed to the ladies' waiting-room. I begged a sheet of paper and an envelope from the attendant in charge. It was a sheet of paper which she gave me—and on it I scribbled:—

"You are watched. Your intentions are known.

"The police are travelling by the five-five train to London in attendance on the lady

in the grey dress. If they do not take you on the road they will arrest you when you reach town.

"Then heigh-ho for the gallows!"

I was in doubt whether or not to add that last line. I daresay if I had had a second or two to think I should not have added it; but I had not. I just scrawled it off as fast as I could, folded the sheet of paper, slipped it into the envelope, which I addressed in large, bold letters to Mr. John Tung. The attendant had a little girl with her, of, perhaps, twelve or thirteen years old, who was acting as her assistant. I took her to the waiting-room door, pointed out Mr. Tung, and told her that if she would slip that envelope into the gentleman's hand and come back to me without having told him where she got it from, I would give her a shilling.

"I TOOK HER TO THE WAITING-ROOM DOOR AND POINTED OUT MR. TUNG."

Officials were examining tickets, doors were being closed, preparations were being made to start, when that long-legged young person ran off on her errand. She gave Mr. Tung the envelope as he was stepping into the carriage. He had not time even to realize that he had got it before she was off again. I saw him glance with a startled face at the envelope, open it, hurriedly scan what was within, then make a dart into the compartment by which he was standing, emerge with a bag in his hand, and hurry from the station. Conscience had been too much for him again. The big, burly man, seeing him going, went hurrying after him, as the train was in the very act of starting. As it moved along the platform the face of the third man appeared at the window of his compartment, gazing in apparent astonishment after the other two. He might go to London by the five-five if he chose. I did not think it mattered if he went alone. I scanned the newspapers very carefully the next day; as there was no record of anything unusual having happened during the journey or afterwards I concluded that my feeling that nothing was to be feared from that solitary gentleman had been well founded, and that the lady in the grey dress had reached her destination in comfort and safety.

What became of Mr. Tung when he left

the station I do not know; I can only say that he did not return to the hotel. That Buxton episode was in August. About a month afterwards, towards the close of September, I was going north. I started from Euston station. I had secured my seat, and, as there were still several minutes before the train went off, I strolled up and down the platform. Outside the open door of one of the compartments, just as he had done at Buxton station, Mr. Tung was standing!

The sight of him inspired me with a feeling of actual rage. That such a dreadful creature as I was convinced he was should go through life like some beast of prey, seeking for helpless victims whom it would be safe to destroy—that he should be standing there, so well dressed, so well fed, so seemingly prosperous, with all the appearance about him of one with whom the world went very well—the sight of him made me positively furious. It might be impossible, for various reasons, to bring his crimes home to him, but I could still be a thorn in his side, and might punish him in a fashion of my own. I had been the occasion to him of one moment in which conscience had mastered him and terror held him by the throat. I might render him a similar service a second time.

I was seized with a sudden desire to give him a shock which would at least destroy his pleasure for the rest of that day. Recalling what I had done at Buxton, I went to the bookstall and purchased for the sum of one penny an envelope and a sheet of paper. I took these to the waiting-room, and on the sheet of paper I wrote three lines—without even a moment's consideration:—

"You are about to be arrested. Justice is going to be done.

"Your time has come.

"Prepare for the end."

I put the sheet of paper containing these words into the envelope, and, waylaying a small boy, who appeared to have been delivering a parcel to someone in the station, I instructed him to hand my gentleman the envelope and then make off. He did his part very well. Tung was standing sideways, looking down the platform, so that he did not see my messenger approaching from behind; the envelope was slipped into his hand almost before he knew it, and the boy was off. He found himself with an envelope in his hand without, I believe, clearly realizing whence it had come—my messenger was lost in the crowd before he had turned; it might have tumbled from the skies for all he could say with certainty.

For him the recurrence of the episode of the mysterious envelope was in itself a shock. I could see that from where I stood. He stared at it, as he had done before, as if it had been a bomb which at any moment might explode. When he saw his own name written on the face of the envelope, and the fashion of the writing, he looked frantically around, as if eagerly seeking for some explanation of this strange thing. I should say, for all his appearance of sleek prosperity, that his nerves were in a state of jumps. His lips twitched; he seemed to be shaking; he looked as if it would need very little to make him run. With fingers which I am sure were trembling he opened the envelope; he took out the sheet of paper—and he read.

When he had read he seemed to be striving to keep himself from playing the cur; he looked across the platform with such an expression on his face and in his eyes! A constable was advancing towards him, with another man by his side. The probability is that, scared half out of his senses, conscience having come into its own, he misinterpreted the intention of the advancing couple. Those three lines, warning him that he was about to be arrested, that his time had come, to prepare for the end, synchronized so perfectly with the appearance of the constable and his companion, who turned out to be a "plain clothes man" engaged in the company's business, that in his suddenly unnerved state he jumped to the conclusion that the warning and its fulfilment had come together—that those two officers of the law were coming to arrest him there and then.

Having arrived at that conclusion, he seems to have passed quickly to another—that he would not be taken alive. He put his hand into his jacket pocket, took out a revolver, which had no doubt been kept there for quite another purpose, put the muzzle to his brow, and while the two men—thinking of him not at all—were still a few yards off, he blew his brains out. He was dead before they reached him—killed by conscience.

They found his luggage in the compartment in which he had been about to travel. The contents of his various belongings supplied sufficient explanation of his tragic end. He lived in a small flat off the Marylebone Road—alone; the address was contained in his bag. When the police went there they found a miscellaneous collection of articles which had certainly, in the original instance, never belonged to him. There were feminine belongings of all sorts and kinds. Some of them were traced to their former owners,

"HE WAS DEAD BEFORE THEY REACHED HIM—KILLED BY CONSCIENCE."

and in each case the owner was found to have died in circumstances which had never been adequately explained. This man seemed to have been carrying on for years, with perfect impunity, a hideous traffic in robbery and murder—and the victim was always a woman. His true name was never ascertained. It was clear, from certain papers which were found in his flat, that he had spent several years of his youth in the East. He seemed to have been a solitary creature—a savage beast alone in its lair. Nothing was found out about his parents or his friends; nor about two acquaintances of whom I might have supplied some particulars. Personally, I never saw nor heard anything of either of them again.

I went on from Euston station by that train to the north. Just as we were about to start, a girl came bundling into my compartment whom I knew very well.

"That was a close shave," she said, as she took her seat. "I thought I should have missed it; my taxi-cab burst a tyre. What's this I heard them saying about someone having committed suicide on the platform? Is it true?"

"I believe there was something of the kind; in fact, I know there was. It has quite upset me."

"Poor dear! You do look out of sorts. A thing like that would upset anyone." She glanced at me with sympathetic eyes. "I was talking about you only yesterday. I was saying that a person with your power of what practically amounts to reading people's thoughts ought to be able to do a great deal of good in the world. Do you think you ever do any good?"

The question was asked half laughingly. We were in a corridor carriage. Two women at the other end of it suddenly got up and went, apparently, in search of another. I had been in no state to notice anything when I had got in; now I realized that one of the women who had risen was the one who had worn the grey dress at Buxton. She had evidently recognized me on the instant. I saw her whisper to her companion in the corridor, before they moved off:—

"I couldn't possibly remain in the same compartment with that half-bred gipsy-looking creature. I've had experience of her before."

I was the half-bred gipsy-looking creature. The experience she had had of me was when I saved her life at Buxton. That I did save her life I am pretty sure. I said to my friend, when they had gone:—

"I hope that sometimes I do do a little good; but even when I do, for the most part it's done by stealth, and not known to fame; and sometimes, even, it's not recognized as good at all."

"Is that so?" replied my friend. "What a very curious world it is."

When I thought of what had happened on the platform which we were leaving so rapidly behind, I agreed with her with all my heart and soul.

The Berlin Post Office Museum.

By MRS. HERBERT VIVIAN.

Illustrations from Photographs by Franz Kullrich, Berlin.

IN the uninspiring description that Baedeker, with strict truthfulness, but with his usual lack of enthusiasm or imagination, gives of Berlin, we may read, "Post Office Museum in the Imperial Post Office, Leipziger Strasse 15, open Monday and Thursday from eleven to one, on application to the doorkeeper."

This announcement could surely never rouse hopes of anything exciting or even mildly interesting, and sightseers, unless they were absolutely at a loose end for something to do, would scarcely be tempted to take the trouble to explore the imposing building. It was entirely by chance that I ever made my way thither. I was wandering down the Leipziger Strasse one day, looking for a photographer, when a sudden and severe shower unpleasantly surprised me. I had no umbrella, but, alas, I had a new hat! In front of me was the General Post Office, and I suddenly remembered that I had seen the above paragraph when casting an eye down the pages of the guide-book. So, picking up my skirts, I made a hasty dash across the road, and in two seconds found myself in a very noble and stately palace, all marble stairs and columns, with wide galleries and echoing halls.

I do not fancy there is anything quite like the Berlin Post Office Museum in any other country. At any rate, there is nothing so complete or interesting to the casual observer, who is, frankly, rather bored with collections and so forth. In London there is absolutely nothing of the kind, and the General Post Office could only show me a few archives and a small model of a mail-coach. But the Berlin Museum has aroused interest in all countries, and as soon as its object was known presents of models, curiosities, and every type of exhibit connected with the post poured in from foreign Governments, savants, and collectors.

The Russian Imperial Post at Archangel.

THIS AND THE FOLLOWING PICTURES ARE FROM MODELS REPRESENTING STRANGE METHODS OF CARRYING THE MAILS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD.

Undoubtedly the most interesting part of the place is the second floor, where you will find a really unique collection of models illustrating the curious way our letters travel to us from many out-of-the-way parts of the world. To most people the postman at home with his rat-tat on the front door seems a very prosaic person, chiefly connected with Christmas-boxes, but I wonder how many of us have thought of the postman at the other end when we receive a letter from a far-off cousin in Russia, or a postcard dated from an out-of-

In Lapland the mails travel in sledges drawn by a picturesque turn-out of four reindeer.

the-way corner of Turkestan? Until I visited the Berlin Post Office Museum, prompted merely by an unworthy desire to save the roses in my hat, which, unlike the ones in the poem, simply hated being washed in the shower, I had not an idea of what picturesque and romantic surroundings an ordinary envelope and stamp may pass through, even in these prosaic times.

The Post Office Museum instructs us as to curious ways in which mails were carried in former days. The monastic postman was an institution of those times. Often he would take over a year on his rounds. In Berlin you may see a great parchment roll six yards long, which he carried with him on a journey that began in the neighbourhood of Vienna and reached as far as the Rhine at Cologne, returning by Strassburg, Switzerland, and the mountains of Tyrol. The postman used to stay a night or two in each monastery on the road, and sometimes visited as many as six hundred in one of his rounds. Wherever he halted the abbot used to enter on his roll the news and reports of the deaths of any monks or benefactors.

Another very curious way of carrying the post across the plains of Holland was by sail-cart. A light boat was put on to four wheels, provided with great sails, and started on a level road, where it raced faster than on any sea.

In early days the mails went sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, next by coach or carriage, and finally we have arrived at the railway stage. But in distant lands the post is still carried in strange ways. Camels, elephants, buffaloes, reindeer—in short, a veritable menagerie assists in the transmission of our correspondence, and in Darkest Africa we should scarcely be surprised to see a lion or a hippopotamus running to greet us with a picture-postcard in his mouth.

But the most fascinating way in which the Berlin Museum instructs us as to the curiosities of the post is by means of the most beautifully-modelled little groups which were executed in an industrial school in Russia. They are perfect gems, just as lifelike as a miniature Mme. Tussaud. Not only do the humans almost speak, but reindeer, clothed in natural fur and armed with spreading antlers, prance with realistic fervour, and nothing can be more exquisite than the gay little Eskimo dogs.

In the wild mountains of the Caucasus the postman must be provided not only with an Alpine outfit, but also with an escort as a protection against brigands.

One of our photographs shows us the Russian Imperial Post at Archangel, on the White Sea, the strange Arctic city with its

yellow houses and red tiles, its churches with brilliant frescoes, gilt domes, and emerald-green roofs. Here you will find no commonplace blue figures with red collars and peaked caps. Instead, your correspondence travels in an archaic-looking boat manned by—but how can I say manned when it is rowed by a bevy of sturdy-looking damsels, each clad in a wondrous and variegated costume? The photograph can give no idea of the quaintness of their Noah's Ark attire or the brilliancy of the colours. Every vivid shade is pressed into the service, so that they might almost be trying to emulate a parrot's plumage. The gay effect is further enhanced by the dazzling sky and cobalt sea. In these parts it is the women who always row while the men steer. Besides acting as postmen, lamplighters, etc., they do, moreover, much of the hard work, such as building and carrying bricks and materials, or farming the land. In return they have their compensations, for they often attain to the dignity of an alderman or even a mayor.

In Russia the post-office is a very busy place. Not only do the employés distribute the letters, but they also make notes of the contents if they look in the least bit suspicious. One of the ingenious methods in force is to slit the top of the envelope. The letter is then abstracted, copied, and replaced. The envelope is finally inserted in a machine which welds the two split edges so cleverly together again that it is practically impossible to see that they have ever been forced apart. Sometimes, it is said, in fits of absent-mindedness letters are put back in the wrong envelopes, which is apt occasionally to cause a little confusion!

In Lapland, among the Samoyedes who inhabit the tundras of the north, we find the mails travelling in sledges drawn by a picturesque turn-out of four reindeer. The tundras are swamps on which strange snow-white moss and lichen flourish. In summer the district is an inaccessible morass covered with wild-fowl and its own wonderful flora, but in winter it is frozen hard, and can easily be crossed. Indeed, such is the severity of the climate in these parts that the soil only one or two feet below the surface is frozen all the year round.

The reindeer will flourish where no other beast can. A horse must have a certain amount of his accustomed fodder even in Arctic regions, but a reindeer does not even need the dried fish that a dog will put up with. He is the most accommodating beast, and will seek his own provender, lichen or seaweed, shovelling the snow on one side with his great flat horns and scraping the moss from the frozen surface.

In marshy parts of Asiatic Russia great shaggy beasts draw the antediluvian-looking two-wheeled wagon, whilst men almost as shaggy act as postmen.

The harnessing of the reindeer mail sledge is quite unique. First goes a reindeer, and then comes a boat-shaped sleigh in which a man sits. Next comes another reindeer, followed by a sleigh filled with letters and packages. Single reindeer and sledges follow alternately, the rear being brought up by a reindeer.

In the wild mountains of the Caucasus the postman holds a post of some danger, for he must be protected not only against savage brigands, but also against the inclemency of the skies. There are few practicable routes across the precipitous ranges, and Mount Elbruz, the loftiest peak, is over eighteen thousand feet high. Nowhere in the world are there so many peoples, nations, languages, and religions, and you will scarcely find so many dare-devil ruffians elsewhere.

The postman must be provided not only with an Alpine outfit, but with an escort, as he warily climbs paths as steep as the side of a house. In the illustration we see him chaperoned by four companions. First goes a Santa Claus-looking figure armed with a pickaxe, next comes another provided with a spade to shovel away the snow. Then in the middle plods the postman, bending under the weight of a heavy parcel, which is strapped to his body. The party is completed by two guards armed with swords, guns, pistols, and knives. The little group is most perfectly modelled and posed, and many a renowned sculptor might be proud of the lifelike attitudes.

In marshy parts of Asiatic Russia we may find the buffalo post. Great shaggy beasts draw the antediluvian-looking two-wheeled wagon, whilst men almost as shaggy, in long, rough white garments and astrachan caps, act as postmen. The carts, as may be seen in the illustration, sometimes carry a passenger as well, but it need hardly be said that progress by this mail-coach is neither rapid nor agreeable. Buffaloes are far more powerful than oxen, and are specially useful in the swamps of Siberia. They can tread with ease where most animals would fear to venture, for their broad splay feet seem made on purpose to wade through mud and morass.

In Kamchatka and on Lake Baikal the post-bags are carried in sledges drawn by a whole army of dogs, intelligent creatures of the same race as those which dragged Peary to the Pole. One of them acts as leader and goes on ahead unharnessed and quite alone, to encourage and point out the way to his companions. He is really just as good as a postilion, for he requires little guiding beyond being told right or left, fast or slow.

In Kamchatka and on Lake Baikal the post-bags are carried in sledges drawn by a whole army of dogs.

This mail service of dogs can do a hundred miles in twenty-four hours, and, moreover, take two travellers with luggage. A team will often do sixty miles day after day without fatigue. They are only fed once in twenty-four hours, usually at night, when the journey is over. A good deal of fighting goes on among the dogs, and when an Eskimo dog is thoroughly annoyed no tiger can equal him in the ferocity of his expression. He does not bark, but he gives a long and hideous howl, the real wolf-cry.

Another strangely picturesque post travels across Asiatic Turkey from Aleppo to Karaman. The country is mountainous and romantic, and the little, gaily-caparisoned group of horsemen is even more romantic still. This is the Tartar post. Three unmounted horses, laden with packages and letters, fill the middle of the picture. Behind them gallop the postmen, whip in hand, as if their lives depended on their speed. No doubt

Another strangely picturesque turn-out is the Tartar post, which travels across Asiatic Turkey from Aleppo to Karaman.

they often do, for that wild country teems with brigands and warring tribes. At the head and tail of the procession ride zaptiehs, or Turkish policemen, to guard the mail.

There is something impressive and mysterious about a procession of camels, and in the dreary desert of the Tarantas a slow, stately procession makes its deliberate way at appointed times, carrying the post across the sandy wastes. All camels have not, however, the distinguished appearance of the fleet dromedary, and our illustration shows the

The two-humped Bactrian camel, which draws the post-wagon in the dreary desert of the Tarantas.

two-humped Bactrian camel — a curious, dwarfed creature, which, though it possesses only about half as much leg, has a much nicer disposition and far less inclination to put on frills. The post-wagon that he draws is almost as odd in appearance as himself, and seems a cross between a child's cradle and a prehistoric perambulator.

Then we are shown the postman of the Isle of Formosa, called Ch'ien li ma, or the Horse of a Thousand Miles. This hard-worked person often has to carry a hundred and sixty pounds at a trot for many days and nights. He must not only be so smart and strong that he alone is capable of tackling half-a-dozen brigands, but he must, moreover, be ready to face a ghost if necessary. In Formosa the natives are so superstitious and timorous that if they see or hear the smallest sign of anything uncanny they will not only run away from it as fast as they can, but they will throw down anything that hampers their flight in the least degree. In order to be more hardy and enduring, the Horse of a Thousand Miles never eats a full meal, but when he is hungry he will "eat himself seven-tenths full." Another way of training for fitness is to learn to run with bags of sand fixed to his ankles.

Next we make the acquaintance of the swimming postman of India and the ski-ing postman of the Andes. The former frequents a district where rivers abound and bridges are few, so that to avoid extensive *détours* he must be ready at any moment to take to the water. He is equipped as a swimmer, and wears as uniform only a sketchy bathing costume, a turban, and a life-belt.

The Argentine Government import Norwegians to carry the posts in winter across the Andes on skis. This is probably the most perilous task known to the postal service of the world. The men travel at heights from three thousand to eighteen thousand feet above the plain. They never know what is beneath their feet. They may be standing on table-land or they may be crossing a canyon filled with thousands of feet of snow. If they loiter they may sink and nothing can save them. Extraordinary courage and daring are required, and many find their death in the chasms.

These are only a few of the curiosities of the post, and to all travellers and tourists who wish to learn more I heartily commend a visit to the interesting little museum in Berlin.

THE WONDERFUL GARDEN

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WAXEN MAN.

NEXT morning Charles had his first swimming lesson from Mr. Penfold, with the girls as onlookers. After which Mr. Penfold said :—

"I've done that translation. And I've had it typed. So you can tell your uncle about it and present it to him. He'll like it awfully, I know. By the way, there's something written in the end about the seventh of July. That's to-morrow. So you'd better present it then."

When the children got home they spread the Latin book on the table in the window to catch the last rosy sunset light, and Charles said, with proud affection :—

"*Now*, Rupert! We don't want any old translation when *you're* here."

Rupert frowned, and the girls shrank as sensitive plants shrink when a finger touches them. They knew the sort of bitter thing about its not being worth while to do things for kids which seemed to be trembling on Rupert's lips. But quite quickly his face changed. He turned red—or was it only the deepened red of the sunset?—and said :—

"You know, I'm afraid I've kidded you rather about my Latin. I'm not very good at it, as a matter of fact. I've only just begun Virgil."

"But you do know a lot. You're always saying bits of it," said Charles, anxiously.

"That was swank," said Rupert, strongly —"silly swank. It was all wrong, I expect. There, now it's out!"

"Never mind," said Charlotte, "we shall have the translation to-morrow, and we'll try a spell *at once*. I'm sorry the leopard that spoke was only you, Rupert. We did think you'd have to believe in spells after that."

"There's something written at the end," said Caroline, who was still examining the book; "I'd forgotten about that." And there was. In very faint brown ink. The writing ran :—

"On the seventh day of the seventh month, and at the seventh hour, let the seed be sown. Seven seeds and no more for the one sowing. In the garden of peace let them be sown, which same is the seventh garden of the world. Let him that would sow, take heed to bathe him seven times in fair water, and let him sow with his face set eastward, with silence at the lips and at the heart faith in all good things and the love of all things beautiful. After seven weeks the blossom shall appear. Then let him who sowed the seed eat of the flower. The seed of the F. of H. D."

"What?" cried Rupert.

"That's all," said Caroline. "It stops short like that. There isn't any more."

There had been more, but someone had scratched the rest out.

"With a knife or scissors," explained Caroline. "Oh, what a pity!"

"I say——" Rupert was beginning, but Charles interrupted.

He had stooped to look up under the page that Caroline was fingering. "There's some more—look, turn over!"

There was.

"Until it be granted none knoweth his heart's most dear desire. But after it is granted he perceiveth that so, and not otherwise, was and must ever have been the true Desire of the Heart."

"That's true, at any rate," said Charlotte. "I was just wondering what my heart's desire really was. Suppose you thought it was going to be a new paint-box, but the flower knew better, and it turned out that elephants was what you really wanted?"

"No, but I say," said Rupert, hurriedly; "look here. You know I don't believe in magic. I'd like to—really I would. But I found something. You've got the key of the drawing-room. I believe I know where those seeds are."

The drawing-room was almost dark when they got there. Just one last ray of dusky gold lay across the room; it struck the round mirror and was reflected with dazzling brightness on some golden object at the end of the room. "The harp!" whispered Rupert. "How queer! Because it was exactly there——"

It was still exactly there. And every one was quite sure that this little round box held the seeds of which the book told.

"See," said Charlotte, holding them in the ray of yellow light, "they're shaped like hearts, and they're pink like wishes. I know wishes are pink. They must be some colour, and why not that?"

"But ought we to take them?" was the blighting question of Caroline.

It was settled by a note, which Harriet obligingly carried to the uncle.

"Dearest Uncle,—There are some pinky seeds in the drawing-room. May we have seven to sow?"

And the answer was:—

"Certainly. Seventy, if you like.—Your D.S.T.U."

So very early next morning they got up. Bathing seven times is no joke, especially when you dry thoroughly between, and this Caroline conscientiously insisted on. "We must be *quite* sure we get it *quite* right," she said.

The four children met, by appointment, at the top of the stairs, and crept down in silence. They went out by the French window which had once admitted Rupert. When they were outside he said:—

"I bathed seven times too, because Charles did nothing but bother. But it's no good *my* sowing the things, even if it's all true, because I haven't faith in my heart, or my head either. I think really it's the head's fault."

"Oh, never mind your head," said Charlotte; "we'll all sow one each, and the three over we'll put in all together, all of us."

The grass was still dewy-wet, but the gardener was at work in the Wonderful Garden. The children went through the ancient formula of "Ena, dena, dina, dus," to decide who should approach him, and the lot fell to Charlotte.

"Please," she said, "may we have a bit of garden for our own?"

"Aye," said the gardener, pointing to a vacant plot near the arbour.

"Oh, thank you," said Charlotte; "but mayn't we have a bit in the garden of peace?"

"Who learned you to call it that?" the gardener asked, looking at her strangely.

"It's the right name, isn't it?" Charlotte asked, with sudden anxiety.

"It's the right name, right enough," he admitted.

"We want a bit that won't be disturbed for seven weeks," Charlotte explained, and he looked at her more strangely than ever.

"Sure you've got the right seed to sow?"

Charlotte opened her hand, and he stooped and looked at it. Then he stood up and saluted like a soldier.

"Why," said Charlotte, "you—what do you mean?"

"Nothing," he said, straightening his back; "only I worked here all my days, and my father afore me, and his father afore him, and so on back. You can see our names on the stones in the churchyard, same as you see master's people's names on the tombs inside of the church. I'll find a corner for you, my dear, and no one sha'n't disturb the seed, once you've set it. You know how it's done? No chatter, and which way to look?"

"Yes, I know," said Charlotte. "But how do you know?"

"Old man's tales," he said—"old man's tales," and he led the way to the terrace. "Over yonder, between the lupins and the larkspurs," he said. "That'll be your plot, and I'll mark the place."

Charlotte, very much impressed, beckoned the others. In silence they sowed the seed.

The gardener watched them, and when they had planted the seeds and covered them over, he took a pencil and a painted slip-label from his pocket, wrote on it, and stuck it in the ground. The children stooped to read what he had written. "F. of H. D.," it said.

"Well!" said Caroline.

"Least said, soonest mended," said the gardener. "I shouldn't wonder if seed-leaves was to break ground in seven days. It was allus a wonderful garden, this was," he said, and turned to his work.

"Well!" said Charlotte again, and they went back through the dewy park.

Next day they presented the two books to the uncle, and he was delighted. "This will revolutionize my work," he said, when he had looked at the books—and went away, nursing the books tenderly.

The days went on. Rupert spent a good deal of time with Mr. Penfold, and it was one of the days when he was there that Charles said: "You know what Rupert was saying that day, about doing something real with our magic?"

"Like making her come alive," said Charlotte, looking up at the picture of Dame Eleanour.

"No; like making wax images of people and sticking pins in them. I should like to do that. I feel as if the 'Language of' was bust up somehow. I wish we could make a wax image of someone."

"Not to stick pins in," said Caroline, firmly. "That would be ink-black magic, I'm certain. And very, very wrong and unkind besides."

"No pins, I don't mean," said Charles; "but just make one. We could decide what to stick into it after we'd made it."

"Caro and I wouldn't agree to sticking anything into it," said Charlotte; "and anyhow, you haven't got any wax."

"Yes I have," said Charles, triumphantly, "so there! I've been saving it up ever since he said that."

"Where from?" asked the girls together.

"The sticking-out bits of candles," said Charles, "and one or two ends out of candlesticks, in the morning, when they are put on the boot-shelf in the scullery to be cleaned. It's a good big lump now. Shall I get it?"

"It would be fun to model something," Caroline admitted, and Charles, falling flat on his front, felt behind the big books on the bottom shelf and produced a large ball of a grey, semi-transparent nature.

"Here it is," he said. "Now I'll tell you what I've thought; only don't tell Rupert. We'll do it first and tell Rupert afterwards. And then he'll have to believe."

"Well, what is it?"

"We'll make," said Charles, slowly and seriously, "a wax image of the Murdstone man, and we'll make him hollow; his legs and arms needn't be, nor his head, but just his chest. And make his heart separate, and put it in. And take out his heart and melt it every day. That would soften his heart, and he would say he was sorry, and Rupert would forgive him."

"People die if you take their hearts out," said Caroline, with conviction.

"Well, then, don't let's make him hollow. Let's make him solid and then think what to do."

"Oh!" said Caroline. Look here! We'll make the wax image and then be kind to it. You can tame wild beasts with kindness."

"I say," said Charlotte, "let's get bits of bent twigs and pretend they're him, and then make wax clothes."

When the sticks had been found, the three children began to model parts of the Murdstone man; but Caroline and Charles soon stopped and were content to watch Charlotte. She really seemed to know what she was about, which the others felt could not be said of them. She chose suitable twigs, fastened them together with bits of wax, and then began to clothe them with wax.

The new model had a nose and mouth, ears large, but still ears, and hands, each with four fingers and a thumb. And when Charlotte rolled up the tiniest bits of wax, flattened them, and stuck them on the coat and waistcoat for buttons, Caroline shouted "Bravo! You're as good as Praxi—whatshisname!" and even Charles said it wasn't half bad.

"Now," said Charlotte, "the first nice thing to do for him is to put him in a bed of rose-leaves. That's what they say when they mean a life without a sorrow or care."

"And then burn incense. We can make the incense out of the proper flowers," Caroline said.

"Rose-leaves are dull," Charles said; "and perhaps the Murdstone man doesn't like incense."

"The real one mayn't. This one's got to like what we want it to like," said Charlotte. "We made him, and *we* know what he's got to like."

"Then we might make it so that he'd like having pins stuck into him," Charles suggested, hopefully.

"We might; only we shouldn't be so silly.

Come on, bring the 'Language of' and the Murdstone man. I'll get a box and Caro can get the rose-leaves. We'll go out and find a secret place in the wood."

A cardboard box that had held Charlotte's best shoes was filled with sweet pink petals and the waxen image put in it. It looked better standing up, but you don't stand up in a bed, even of rose-leaves. A sort of pedestal was built of old bricks brought, with some toil, from the ruins of the deserted lodge's pig-stye. A flat stone, which took all three to lift, was placed on top. And on this the box. But the box, which said "Smarm and Simple's Hygienic Footwear" in blue letters outside, troubled the girls because it was ugly, and Charles because it was untruthful.

"Whatever he is, he isn't footwear," said Charles. "We could make it true by trampling on him, but you won't agree to that."

"No," said Caroline; "but look here. Let's paste a bit of my green sash on it, and then put moss round. That'll make it more woodland-like."

Cook provided the paste, and Caroline cut the sash. She paste-wetted the first piece of silk, so that it came out in wet spots, very messy-looking, as Charles did not fail to point out.

"Never mind," said Caroline; "I'll cut another bit—it's much too long—and use less paste."

"More paste, less speed," said Charlotte. "I'll cut mine. Then they'll be alike, just as they were before."

This time the box certainly looked very rich, and the moss round it looked very fresh and beautiful.

A smaller pile of bricks supported the lid of a cocoa-tin, for incense.

The "Language of Flowers," hurriedly consulted, informed them that jasmine stood for amiability, St. John's wort for animosity, indian pink for aversion, the pimpernel for change, sage for esteem, and the hazel for reconciliation. Further, that the tamarisk stood for crime and the potato for benevolence.

All these were found in the Wonderful Garden except the potato, and none of the children knew what a potato looks like when it is growing, and they did not like to ask anyone, for fear they, in turn, should be asked what they wanted it for.

"Never mind," said Charles, "we can save one from dinner. I don't suppose it will matter its being cooked."

That the potatoes that day should happen to be mashed seemed to all a mishap yet not a calamity. A quantity, deemed sufficient to influence Mr. Murdstone through his waxen image, was secreted in the envelope of a letter from Aunt Emmeline, and not more than an eighth of the potato escaped into Charles's pocket through the square hole where the Italian stamp had been cut out for his collection.

"We'll arrange the things we want him to be round the box," said Caroline; "and the things we want him not to be we'll burn and call it incense."

It is very hard to make small pieces of green things burn in a cocoa-tin lid in the open air by means of a box of matches and the fragments of a potato-dampened envelope from an aunt in Italy. Nothing much happened except smoke, and the head of a match burnt Charles's finger.

"There's no more paper," said he, "except the bit we've written his name on."

"There's the matchbox," said Caroline. "Let's make a little bonfire with twigs and then put the incense things on when it's burnt up." This they did, the starry gold of St. John's wort, the gay brightness of indian pinks, and the feathery greenness of the tamarisks twisted and writhed amid flames and smoke.

"Now we'll leave it. Please, Murdstone man, let your crimes and your animosity and your aversion be burnt away, and may you lie on beds of roses really as soon as you are changed and amiable. Then, when you are truly benevolent, Rupert and us will esteem you, and the hazel is for reconciliation. Now let's go away and leave the incense to do its healing work, and to-morrow we'll come and put a fresh rose-bed and burn new incense." Thus Caroline. The others agreed, and, after having put on the box the label with the Murdstone man's name, so that Destiny could not pretend to make any mistake as to whom the witchcraft was meant for, they went away through green coverts, in Indian file, to build a wigwam in another part of the wood with three hop-poles, red blankets, and their three mackintoshes.

"I hope Rupert won't ask a lot of questions about what we've been doing to-day," said Charles. But Rupert did not ask any. He came home singularly silent, and went to bed early, announcing that he was going to spend the following day also with Mr. Penfold.

"So we needn't tell him," said Charlotte, "till the good work is done. I'm glad of that."

Next day, with a fresh armful of suitable flowers and some more potatoes—fried this

"NOTHING MUCH HAPPENED EXCEPT SMOKE, AND THE HEAD OF A MATCH BURNT CHARLES'S FINGER."

time, and bearing heavy traces of their close intimacy with the breakfast bacon—the children sought the secret spot where they had lain the waxen image of Mr. Murdstone on its bed of roses. The ashes of the incense bonfire were there, the pedestal was there, the green-covered box was there, half-filled with half-faded rose leaves. But the waxen image was gone!

"He must have fetched it away himself," said Charlotte, breaking an awestruck pause. "He must have felt what we were doing and made up his mind to be benevolent. And he fetched it away so that we shouldn't waste any more good potatoes on him."

"I wish he'd do something to show that he's changed into a Real Good, and what sort of Good he's changed into," said Charles. And it certainly is tiresome to work magic and then not to know exactly how it has acted.

But it was rather a disappointed party that took its way through the greenwood, leaving the secret spot with its trampled flowers and scattered ashes. They came across their wigwam and spent the rest of the morning there, and, when the dinner-bell rang, loaded themselves with the mackintoshes and blankets, which had been forgotten yesterday.

As they trailed out of the wood into the drive Charles, who was first, dropped his blanket and stopped short, blocking the view of the others, who were following him down the narrow path.

"What is it? What is it?" they asked.

"Shish!" said Charles, and backed into the hazel-bushes, and the girls pressed forward to see what there was to "shish" about.

Then they in turn backed into the green covert, and the bushes closed over them as they stood there, holding their breath, as footsteps went by them along the drive. When the footsteps had passed far enough away for the children to dare to move, they backed with one consent into the wood, not stopping till they came to an open glade where they could comfortably look at each other and exclaim, "Well!" They were past all other words; for what they had seen was Rupert coming up the drive, looking pale but not unhappy. And beside him, with his hand on Rupert's shoulder, and talking to him in the friendliest way, was—the Murdstone man!

"Rupert will *have* to believe now!" was

the first thing anyone found breath to say. It was Caroline who said it. The others still had not breath enough for more than "Rather!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE ATONEMENT OF RUPERT.

THE three C.'s had come slowly back to the house, and, seeing no sign of Rupert and the changed Murdstone man, had, with great tact, — chiefly Caroline's—refrained from going in search of Rupert or of information.

They had just shut themselves into the dining-room and waited. For it was plain that something more must happen. The three C.'s were very glad indeed when at last they heard footsteps in the hall, and voices.

No one listened, yet no one could help hearing, through the open window, the parting words of Rupert and the Murdstone man :—

"I'll do it now. That'll be the last. Thank you, sir. Good-bye!"

Then came the sound of retreating boots on gravel. The front door banged, and next moment Rupert came in. His eyes were very bright and his face very pale. He came in, shut the door, leaned against it, and seemed to swallow nothing, twice. Then he said, looking straight in front of him—and Charlotte noticed that his hands were clenched :—

"Look here, I've got something to tell you. I don't suppose you'll want to speak to me again after it."

"Yes, we shall," said Charles, "whatever it is."

Rupert took no notice. He went on, after a moment's silence :—

"I told a lie about Mr. Macpherson—a beastly lie! He didn't hit me like I said he did. I didn't mean to say it; I just said it, and then I couldn't take it back. I've been most awfully wretched. That's all."

"But you've owned up now," was the only comforting thing even Caroline could think of in that terrible moment. Charles, as pale as Rupert, with his eyes quite round, said :—

"You *couldn't* have!"

Charlotte said nothing.

"I'd like you to understand," said Rupert, miserably, "before I go away."

"Go away?" said Charlotte, quite as miserably. "Where?"

"Back to Mr. Macpherson, of course. Your uncle won't keep me after this."

"Did he say so?"

"No; he said I was to come back to him when I'd taken Mr. Macpherson to the door. But I feel I must tell you first, in case he sends me off right away."

"Oh, Rupert!" said Caroline. "I *am* so sorry." And then she did something rather heroic. She saw that Rupert wanted to say more—wanted it desperately—and that he could not possibly say it to all three of them together, though he could have told it to one of them, either to her or to Charlotte, if they had been alone. So Caroline got up and said :—

"Charles, come outside. I want to say something." And when she got him outside the door, "Come out," she said, earnestly. "Yes, you shall. Rupert doesn't want the lot of us. Let him talk to Charlotte. He can't stand a crowd."

"Isn't it dreadful," said Charles, in very shocked tones, "Rupert turning out a liar like this?"

"Oh, *don't*," said Caroline, hotly. "It must have been awful for him, all this time. And now he's sorry, and he's owned up. We've got to try and forget about it. Let's talk about something else."

But it was very difficult to talk about something else.

Rupert, left with Charlotte, saw the others go past the window.

"I wanted to tell you before," he said, "that day when you talked about being disagreeable; only I couldn't."

"Dear old Rupert!" said Charlotte. "I'm so jolly glad you've got rid of it. *That* was the black dog. I knew there was something. Do tell me, old chap, unless you'd rather not. The others are off down the avenue."

Rupert left the door and came to the table, and, half-sitting on it, with his face turned away and twisting the tablecloth into pleats, he said :—

"You know, I always thought I was going to be an extra honourable sort of chap. Father used to say things. I never did anything like it before. You see, I was awfully sick at having to go with Mr. Macpherson at all. He treated me as if I was a baby. At least, that's what I thought. He says now he meant to be kind, and he thought I was younger than I am. And the bread and milk. Everything else I told you was true except hitting me. And he did say there were ways of dealing with sulky boys. And I decided I would run away. And I hurt my hand on a gate. And I was so angry, it seemed the only thing to do."

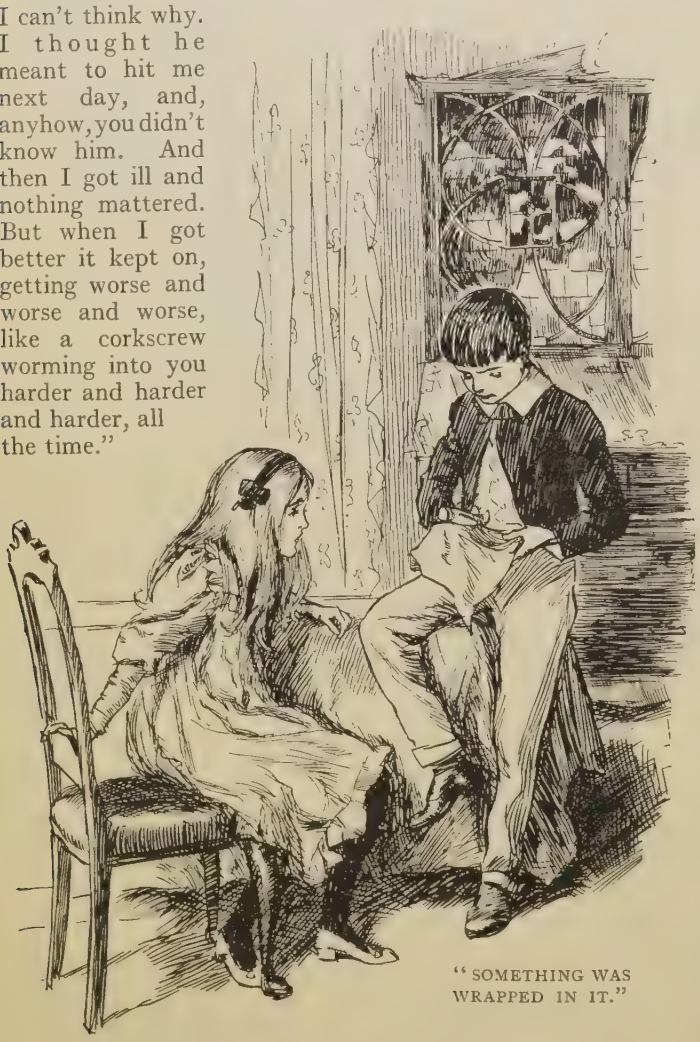
"I know," said Charlotte.

"And then, when I was explaining to you,

somehow I couldn't find the proper words to explain how hateful it was, and I thought you'd think I'd run away just for nothing. And then my hand hurt, and I thought you thought something more ought to have happened. And then I said that. Mean beast!"

"I do *wish* you hadn't," said Charlotte.

"It didn't seem to matter just at first. I can't think why. I thought he meant to hit me next day, and, anyhow, you didn't know him. And then I got ill and nothing mattered. But when I got better it kept on, getting worse and worse and worse, like a corkscrew worming into you harder and harder and harder, all the time."



"SOMETHING WAS WRAPPED IN IT."

"But why didn't you own up before?" Charlotte asked.

"I couldn't. I never should have if it hadn't been for this."

He pulled his handkerchief with some difficulty from his pocket. Something was wrapped in it. Rupert unfolded and held out the waxen man.

"I came back through the woods yesterday, and then I saw you'd been trying that beastly spell I told you with the pins."

"Oh!" said Charlotte.

"And I knew it was because I'd told that beastly lie."

"Oh! it *wasn't*," said Charlotte. "We did everything nice for him, to make him sorry he was hateful and to make him friends with you. And, oh, Rupert! the spell *did* work. We did it to make him friends with you. *And he is.*"

"He's been jolly decent about it, anyhow," said Rupert. "I found the wax thing as I came home from Mr. Penfold's last night, and I took it away and put it at the back of my collar-drawer. And this morning I took it down to Mr. Penfold's. It made it easier to tell, somehow. And *he* was jolly decent too. He took me over to Tonbridge to tell Mr. Macpherson. And he said a lot of things. He said he'd known all along I'd got something I wanted to get off my chest. And he talked about repentance and things. I do like him."

"I'm glad we made the image," said Charlotte; because it seemed unkind to say nothing, and she could think of nothing else to say.

"And I'm going to stick it, whatever it is. Mr. Macpherson is all right; but it will be hateful leaving here. Only I suppose you'll all be glad I'm going."

"Rupert!"

"Well, then, I know *you* won't, really. I say, Charlotte, you might tell the others. And tell them I know I've been a grumpy brute, but it was *that* going on all the time inside me, like a beastly Spartan fox. It's been like waiting at the dentist's all the time, and this is like having all your teeth out at once, twenty times over."

He tried to laugh, but he did not succeed. Charlotte also tried, and burst into tears.

"Don't!" said Rupert, awkwardly. Charlotte came close to him and rubbed her wet face against his coat-sleeve.

"You're sorry," she said; "and you've owned up, and you'll never do it again."

"You bet I won't," said Rupert. "I say, don't! It makes it ever so much worse. Now I've got to go back to your uncle and get the kick-out. And I jolly well deserve it."

"Just wait a minute," said Charlotte. "I'm going to get something I want to give you before you go. Wait here, won't you?"

"Don't be long, then," said Rupert, in calm wretchedness.

Charlotte dried her eyes and went out; went to her own room and got her favourite "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers." She wrote Rupert's name in it and then marched straight to her uncle's room, opened the door, and went in.

Uncle Charles, for once, was not reading or writing. He was sitting by his table drumming on it with his fingers and looking both sad and angry.

"Uncle!" said Charlotte.

"Where is Rupert?" said the uncle, frowning.

"He doesn't know I'm here," said Charlotte, answering her uncle's thoughts rather than his words. "I asked him to wait while I got something to give him. Uncle, you aren't going to send him away, are you?"

"I feel it only due to Mr. Macpherson to send Rupert back," said the uncle, "to show that we regret the aspersions"—the uncle spoke as to a grown-up equal—"the aspersions cast on him by my abetting Rupert in his flight and removing him from Mr. Macpherson's care. If it is a punishment to Rupert, it is not an undeserved one."

"Yes," said Charlotte, who hadn't thought of this; "but Rupert's been punished—all the time he has. No one else knows but me. He's been perfectly miserable. Only he just *couldn't* tell. And now he has—has told everybody, honourably everybody. Oh, dear uncle, don't; I *am* so mizzy!"

"Come here," said the uncle, and Charlotte found a thin, black-coated shoulder a very good place to cry on.

"But you see," he said, "it's only fair to Mr. Macpherson to send Rupert back. I am willing to believe that he has been punished enough."

"You don't know," said Charlotte. "He's been simply as unbearable as a bear, he's been so unhappy."

"I didn't know that," said the uncle, slowly. "But, no; it's not fair to that man. Rupert must go."

Then Charlotte had one of her bright ideas, and its brightness dried her tears.

"Look here, uncle," she said; "I've got it. I really have. Wouldn't it make up to Mr. Macpherson and show your confidence just the same if you asked him to come here on a visit?"

"I *couldn't*," said the uncle, and it was plain he spoke from the heart. "My work would all go—to pieces. I simply *can't* have visitors—grown-up ones, I mean. The books you've found, they've revolutionized the whole scheme of my work. Yet," he added, thoughtfully, "I owe you something for that."

"Then pay us with Rupert," said Charlotte, eagerly. "Couldn't you bear Mr. Macpherson just for one week-end? Then everybody would know you were friends with him. Oh, uncle! poor Rupert, he is so sorry! And he did own up."

"What was this about a waxen image?" asked the uncle.

Charlotte told him, and he nodded now and then, and said "Yes, yes!" and "Exactly!" And at the end he said:—

"Well, you have attained your end. You have reconciled them. The charm seemed to have worked."

"They've all worked," said Charlotte; "every single charm we've tried. Have yours, uncle?"

"I wish they had," he answered, sighing. "Charlotte, I wish I could do what you wish. Don't try spells to make me, because I can't. Rupert must go back to-morrow, for a fortnight at least. But he shall come back then till the end of the holidays. Will that do? And I'll explain to him that it's not punishment, but just the *consequences* of what he did. If he hadn't told that lie he wouldn't have had to go back."

"But would you have kept him at first, if he hadn't told it?" Charlotte asked.

"He was unhappy there. That would have been enough," said the uncle. "That and your spells."

"It's all right," said Rupert to Charlotte, later. "Your uncle's forgiven me and I'm to come back. And he explained why I must go. And I see it. And I can stick it all right. And I'd rather suffer it up and start fair. I'd rather pay something. I shall have to write and tell my father. That's worse than anything."

"And when you come back," said Charlotte, "we shall think it was all a bad dream."

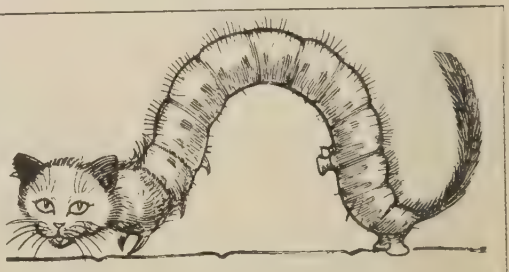
He went next day. The three C.'s saw him off at the station, all wearing *arbor-vitæ* in their buttonholes to signify "unchanging friendship," and Charlotte at the last moment put the "Scottish Cavaliers" into his hand.

ANIMAL DOUBLES.

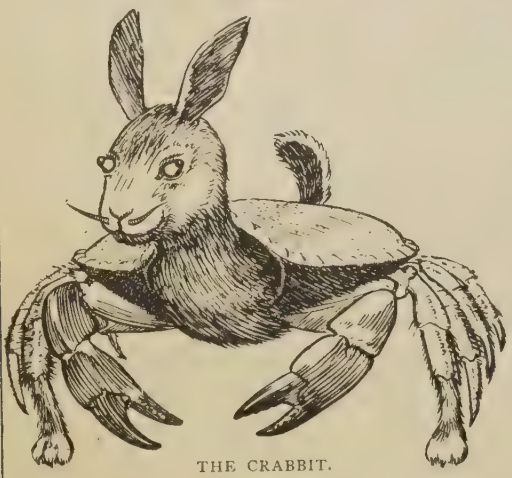
Can You Guess Their Names? A New Kind of Puzzle for Children of all Ages.

By ALICK P. F. RITCHIE.

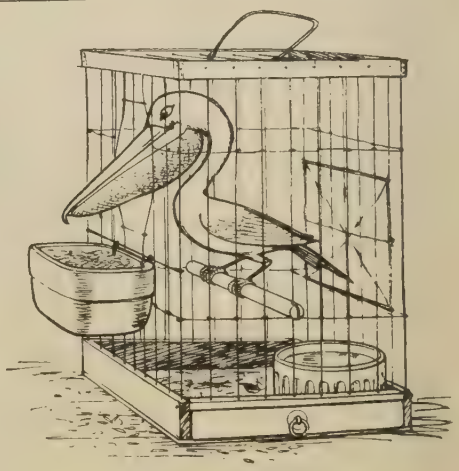
Each of the extraordinary animals depicted in the following pages is made up of two other animals, and has a corresponding name which contains within itself each of the separate names. Thus in the first example given on this page--the Crabbit—the letters "r a b" occur both in crab and rabbit, and so on in the other cases. Following the examples given on this page, the puzzle is now for readers to find names for the animals depicted on the following two pages. In next month's number we shall publish the correct list of names.



THE PUSSYCATERPILLAR.



THE CRABBIT.



THE PELICANARY.

THE KANGAROOSTER AND THE KANGAROOK.

THE PEACOCKATOO, WITH PEACOCKROACH.

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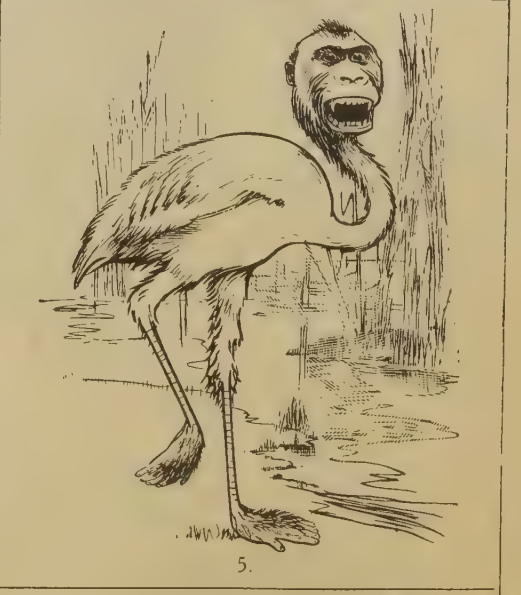

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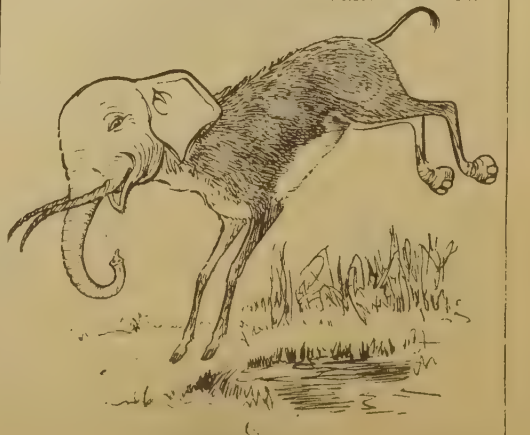

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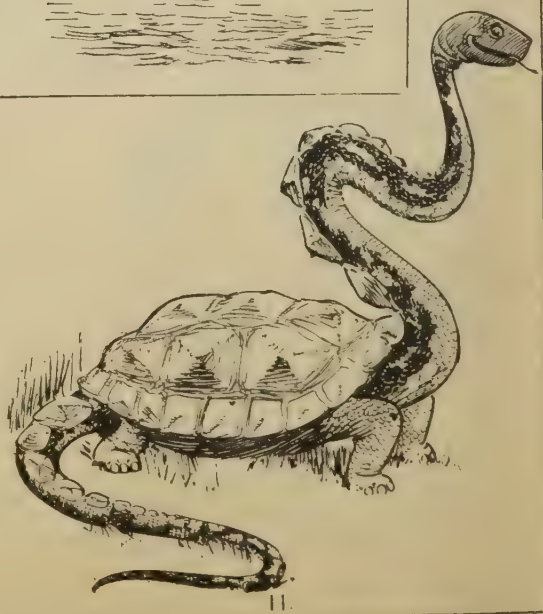
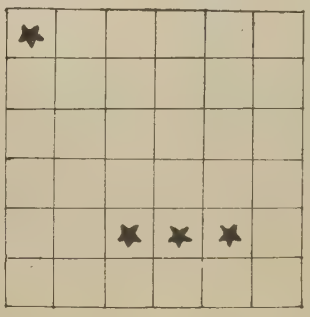


11.

PERPLEXITIES.

Puzzles and Solutions. By Henry E. Dudeney.

58.—THE FOUR STARS.



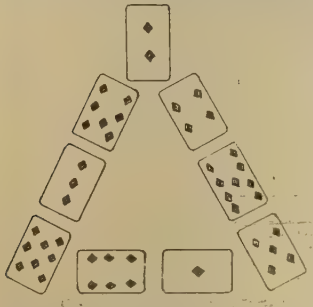
CAN you cut the square into four pieces, all of exactly the same size and shape, each piece to contain a star? The cuts must all pass along the lines, a condition that simplifies the puzzle rather than adds to its difficulty. Yet it will be found quite sufficiently perplexing.

59.—ODDS AND EVENS GAME.

THIS is an interesting little game for two players. They throw an odd number of matches on the table—say fifteen. Now, each takes in turn one, two, or three matches (whichever he likes) and the winner is the player who gets the odd number. Thus, supposing you secure seven matches and your opponent eight, you win; if you secure six and he gets nine, he wins. Try to find out whether the first or second player ought to win in the case of fifteen matches. Then, if you are interested, seek the general law for any odd number of matches, and under the extended conditions that you can draw up to four, or five, or any number of matches.

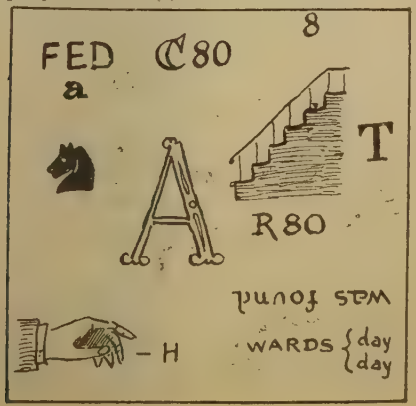
60.—CARD TRIANGLES.

THIS is a companion puzzle to our No. 4 (A "T" Card Puzzle). Take the nine cards of a suit, from ace to nine inclusive, and arrange them in a triangle, as shown in the illustration, so that the number of pips on each side of the triangle is the same. In the example given each side sums to twenty. Can you arrange them (1) so as to get the smallest possible sum and (2) so as to get the largest sum possible? When you have done this, which is quite easy, discover how many different ways there are of arranging the cards under the conditions.



61.—A DOMESTIC TRAGEDY.

CAN you make any sense out of the hieroglyphics in this picture rebus? It tells a little domestic story if properly read.



Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

54.—A NEW MATCH PUZZLE.

1. THE easiest way is to arrange the eighteen matches as in diagrams 1 and 2, making the length of the perpendicular A B equal to a match and a half. Then, if the matches are an inch in length, Fig. 1 contains two square inches and Fig. 2 contains six square inches—4 × 1½. The second case (2) is a little more difficult to solve. The solution is given in Figs. 3 and 4. For the purpose of construction place matches temporarily on the dotted lines. Then it will be seen that as 3 contains five equal equilateral triangles and 4 contains fifteen similar triangles, one

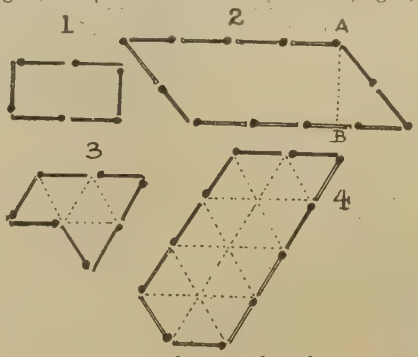


figure is three times as large as the other, and exactly eighteen matches are used.

55.—A TENNIS TOURNAMENT.

CALL the men A, B, D, E, and their wives a, b, d, e. Then they may play as follows without any person ever playing twice with or against any other person :—

	First Court.	Second Court.
1st Day	A d against B e	D a against E b
2nd Day	A e „ D b	E a „ B d
3rd Day	A b „ E d	B a „ D e

It will be seen that no man ever plays with or against his own wife, an ideal arrangement. If the reader wants a hard puzzle, let him try to arrange eight married couples (in four courts on seven days) under exactly similar conditions. It can be done.

56.—THE TWICKENHAM PUZZLE.

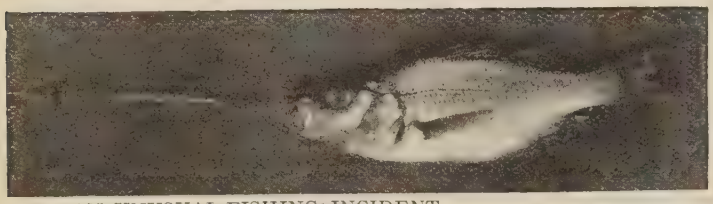
PLAY the counters in the following order: K C E K W T C E H M K W T A N C E H M I K C E H M T, and there you are, at Twickenham. The position itself will always determine whether you are to make a leap or a simple move.

57.—CASTING THE DIE.

THE four throws may occur in any one of 1,296 (or 6 × 6 × 6 × 6) different ways. Assuming ace is thrown at the first throw, then the number of possible ways (ace excluded) for the next three throws is 125 (or 5 × 5 × 5). And the same number of ways happen if the ace is thrown in the second, third, or fourth throw. So there are 500 (that is, 125 + 125 + 125 + 125) different ways of one ace exactly occurring in the four throws. Clearly, then, there are 796 (or 1,296 − 500) ways in which a single ace *cannot* be thrown. Therefore the odds are 796 to 500 against its happening, or (which is the same thing), 199 to 125.

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]



AN UNUSUAL FISHING INCIDENT.

THE very peculiar and unusual manner in which I hooked this white perch in the Gunpowder River, Baltimore Co., is shown in the accompanying photograph. The fish had a hook in its mouth (having escaped from someone else), and when it took my bait and I struck it, my hook must have slipped from its mouth, up the snood of the other hook, and then caught in the loop on the end of it.—Mr. William H. Fisher, 1320, Bolton Street, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

A NOVEL BIRTH CERTIFICATE.

SINCE the Old-Age Pensions Act has been in operation there has been a great search for birth certificates, in order to enable those entitled to its benefits to claim their pensions As the registration of births, more than seventy years ago, was not carried out as now, there has been a difficulty in many cases in proving the age of the applicants, and the accompanying photograph shows a certificate of an exceedingly novel character. At any rate, the local pensions officer said he had never come across one like it, and he was quite prepared to take it as a proof of the age of the applicant. When a child was born in this particular family, a clear glass bottle was procured and partly filled with salt; then the letters and figures forming the names of the child and date of birth were cut out of a newspaper and placed inside the bottle, being put in their correct position with a piece of wire, and then more salt was carefully added to keep them in place. Sprays of flowers and other ornamental designs, cut from cretonne, were also tastefully arranged around the inside of the bottle, and then the whole was tightly packed with salt, and corked and sealed. It was then placed in a prominent position on the dresser or in a corner cupboard, where it has been for more than seventy years. The white salt shows up the letters and ornaments in relief, and the whole effect is novel and pleasing. Owing to the bottle being placed on its side when being packed for removal some years ago, some of the letters and figures became misplaced, as can be seen.—Mr. F. Comer, Glen Lyn, 56, Stafford Rd., Weston-super-Mare.

A NURSEMAID THAT NEVER GETS TIRED.

THE accompanying photograph may interest your readers, as it shows rather a novel method of minding a baby, adopted by many busy Australian mothers, while attending to their domestic duties. This unusual nursemaid is a draught horse's collar, buckled up, and placed on a piece of carpet, and the baby sits in the middle with its toys arranged around it.—Miss Minee Kendall, Eri Eriwah, Moree, New South Wales.

THE STRENGTH OF PLANTS.

THE strength of plant-life is well illustrated in this photograph, as the dark portion represents a mass of Virginia creeper roots which found their way into a drain-pipe, in time completely filling it up and eventually bursting it. The length of the roots taken out of the drain was twenty-six feet, and so closely were they packed together that they could not be pulled apart, but had to be sawn.—Mr. F. Bissell, 10, Langdale Road, Sefton Park, Liverpool.

A COUNTRY IN MINIATURE.

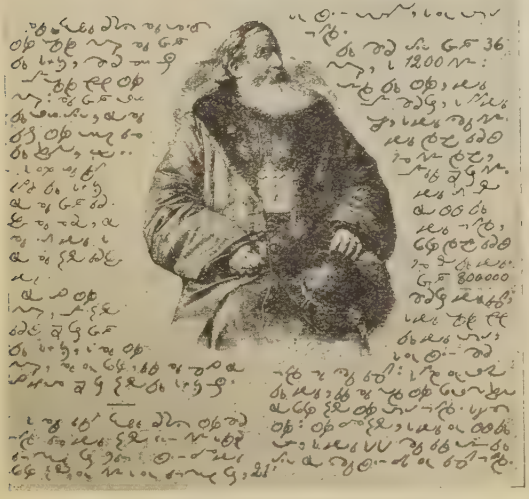
THIS curious-looking mountain range, which is to be seen at Guatemala City, was built of stone and cement by President Cabrera, as an object-lesson to the youth of the turbulent Central American Republic. It is a correct-to-scale map of Guatemala, and is about two hundred yards square. All mountains and towns are shown in miniature, and by turning on a tap the rivers run into the sea.—Mr. H. Giles, Barnfield, Gillingham, Kent.

"THE PROPOSAL"—IN THREE SCENES.

THOUGH I have called it "The Proposal," the little comedy here illustrated is really a story without words. Those of your readers who would like to try their skill at something of the same style may be glad of these details: The foundation of each of the two "birds" represented in the photographs is a blown hen's egg. The legs were made of six or eight lengths of fine wire, twisted together, and divided at one end to form the foot; some of the wires at the other extremity were left long and wound round and through the shell, so as to hold the limbs firmly in place. The necks were made in the same manner; the heads are corks, the beaks matches. One "bird" was finished by winding her all over with natural wool and adorning her with feathers; the other, after having cardboard wings added, was painted red. The pair were home-made, and were considered quite a novelty in Easter eggs. The quaint miniature chairs on which they are seated are made of metal and covered with red plush cushions.—Miss Margaret Baker, Epworth House, Moughland Lane, Runcorn.

CURIOUS INDIAN TOM-TOM.

IT was at Khandalla, on the Western Ghats, near Bombay, that I came across this curious Tom-Tom. The owner, an Indian, had evidently removed the bottom from a syrup tin and stretched parchment over top and bottom, and by means of a piece of string with a knotted end had been able to produce the Tom-Tom noise required.—Mr. Horace A. Dennis, Secretary, Bombay Y.M.C.A.



A REMARKABLE NEWSPAPER.

IN British Columbia there is a little newspaper, the *Kamloops Wawa*, circulating among several tribes of North American Indians. The unique feature of this journal is that it is printed in shorthand. Its story is a remarkable one. Some years ago the Rev J. M. Le Jeune, a Breton missionary, arrived in British Columbia to take charge of a territory some fifty miles square. He found the great obstacle to his work to be the absence of any means of written communication, as the natives had no written language of their own. His repeated efforts to teach them to read and write by ordinary methods failed entirely. The missionary was acquainted with the simple French Duployan shorthand, and then conceived the novel idea of teaching the Indians to write their own language phonetically by means of the shorthand characters. He adapted the stenographic signs to the Chinook language, and the experiment proved a complete success. There are to-day three thousand Indians able to write and read their own language by no other means than shorthand. "Wawa" means "taik" in the Chinook, hence the title of the little newspaper which has been the natural outcome of the missionary's undertaking. The page shown above is part of an article dealing with the Boxer trouble in China.—Mr. J. D. Sloan, Ruanji, St. Peter's, Broadstairs.

A DICKENS MATCH PUZZLE.

WITH eight matches represent the whole of humanity in the immortal and comprehensive language of one of Dickens's leading characters. The answer to this puzzle, which will enable readers to put their knowledge of Dickens to the test, will appear next month.—Mr. J. E. Hutton Priors Marston, Byfield, Northants.

BRIDGE PROBLEM.

(By Wladimir de Rozing.)

Hearts—Queen, 10.
Diamonds—None.
Clubs—King, 6, 4.
Spades—Ace, king, 5, 3.

Hearts—Ace, 6, 5. Diamonds—Ace, 6, 4. Clubs—Queen, knave. Spades—6.	A Z Y B	Hearts—Knave, 9, 8. Diamonds—8, 7. Clubs—2. Spades—Knave, 9, 7.

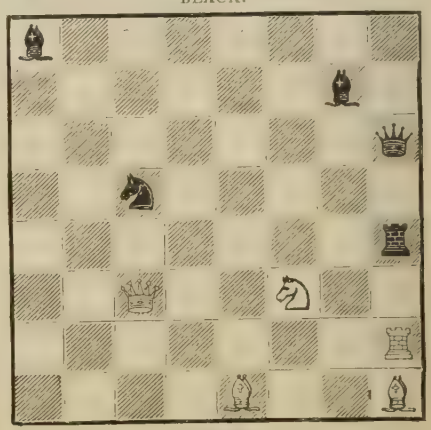
Hearts—King.
Diamonds—10, 5.
Clubs—5.
Spades—Queen, 10, 8, 4, 2.

A has the lead. Spades are trumps. A and B are to make all the nine tricks against any possible defence. The solution will be given next month.

A CHESS PROBLEM.

THE problem is for each White man to capture the corresponding Black man in such a way that the routes traversed by each man never come in contact with one another. The solution will be published next month.—Mr. T. R. Dawson, 128, North Street, Leeds.

BLACK.



WHITE.

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES.

1. The concealed letters are S and Q, and the word is SEQUOIA.

2. By placing the letter Y in each of the vacant circles we have the word SYZYGY.

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S BRIDGE PROBLEM.

A	Y	B	Z
Clubs ace	Clubs 2	Clubs 5	Clubs 3
Diamonds 2	Diamonds 10	Diamonds ace	Diamonds 8
Hearts knave	Clubs 4	Clubs queen	Clubs king
Hearts ace	Hearts 4	Hearts 5	Hearts 3
Spades ace	Spades 3	Diamonds 4	Spades 8
Spades king	Spades 4	Hearts 6	Spades queen
Diamonds 5	Clubs 6	Clubs 8	Clubs 7
Diamonds 6	Diamonds kve.	Diamonds 9	Hearts 7
Diamonds 7	Spades 10	Hearts 9	Hearts 8
Diamonds qn.	Diamonds king	Hearts king	Hearts queen

The winning card in each trick is underlined.

"SOMEONE, STEALING ON ME FROM BEHIND, PUT SOMETHING OVER MY HEAD WHICH BLOCKED OUT ALL THE LIGHT AND MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR ME TO BREATHE."

(*See page* 487.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. xlii. NOVEMBER, 1911. No. 251

JUDITH LEE.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by J. R. Skelton.

[Judith Lee, as readers of the previous stories are already aware, is a teacher of the deaf and dumb by the oral system, and therefore the fortunate possessor of the gift of reading words as they issue from people's lips, a gift which gives her a place apart in fiction.]

IV.—Matched.

HIS gift of mine of entering into people's confidence, even against their will, has occasionally placed me in the most uncomfortable situations. Take, for instance, what I will call the Affair of the Pleasure Cruise, or Matched.

The story began at Charing Cross Station. I had just entered the station and was looking about for the platform from which my train was going to start, when I saw one man hurrying up to another. I do not know what it was which caused him to catch my eye, unless it was that he was in such desperate haste, and was so covered with freckles, and had such a very red moustache; but I distinctly saw him say to the other—what he meant I had not the dimmest notion; some of the language he used was strange:—

"She's done a bunk all right, and is away with the best of the swag. Here's her brief." He handed to the other man what looked to me like a Continental railway-ticket. "I don't fancy the bloke is going; you'll have to go on and get the lot out the other end. It's worth having, you know; we'll be able to plant it easily. You understand? Move yourself; the train's just starting."

The man addressed did move himself, tearing through a gate over which was a board inscribed "Folkestone Harbour and Continent." His doing so made me think of Mr. Brookes. I had been to his wedding that morning, and had, indeed, only just come away from the reception which followed. I had gathered that he and his bride were to travel by that boat-train.

Thinking thus about the bride and bridegroom, who, since the train had started, I took it for granted were already on their way, what was my surprise to see coming through the wicket on to the platform which the boat-train had just quitted—Mr. Everard Brookes! He had discarded the orthodox "frocker" in which he had been married, and in which I had seen him last, for a grey tweed suit—but it was he. And he seemed to be in a state of great disturbance, as if he were looking for someone he could not find. A railway official was on either side of him, each of whom seemed doing his best to calm his obvious agitation. What struck me as the strangest part of it was that he was alone. An idea occurred to me as I walked towards him.

"Mr. Brookes," I asked, "have you missed your train? You haven't let your wife go off alone?"

"She hasn't gone on alone," he rejoined. "She isn't in the train at all."

"She might have been in the train, you know, sir," struck in one of the officials. "It's not easy to make out everyone who's travelling in a long train like that."

Mr. Brookes turned on him with a show of anger which I knew was quite foreign to his character.

"I tell you I saw her go through the gate as clearly as I see you now, but though I watched for her to come back she never returned, although I never once took my

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eyes off the gate; that I am prepared to swear."

He turned to me with an explanation of his discomposure which filled me with surprise.

"We were standing, my wife and I, outside the compartment in which I had reserved our seats, when, about ten minutes before the train was due to start, she said to me: 'Everard, I've forgotten something. I must go and see about it at once. I'll be back in a moment.' She got into the compartment, took her travelling-bag off the seat, and was about to hurry down the platform. I asked her what she had thought of so suddenly; if it was something she wanted I offered to go and get it for her. She laughed at me. 'You stay where you are and let no one get into our carriage. I'll be back in less than a minute.' She was off before I could stop her. I thought it rather odd that she had thought of something so very pressing at the last minute, and had actually taken her bag with her, which contained all her belongings. I saw her go down the platform and through the gate; then, when I had waited two minutes, I strolled down the platform to see if I could discover her. I could see nothing. I was afraid to go through the gate lest we should miss each other, so I stood close to the gate, and I'll swear that no one the least like her came through it."

Mr. Brookes took off his bowler hat and passed his handkerchief across his brow. I had never seen him so disturbed.

"It occurred to me, after I had been waiting some little time, and the train was due to start, that, at her suggestion, I had put the tickets in her bag and practically all my money. I did not know what to do. I had never been in such a position in my life; I had not dreamt that I could be in such a position. They were calling out, 'Take your seats,' and were shutting the doors. What had become of Clare? I could not imagine. I could not go without her. Our luggage was in the train, I could not ask the officials to delay the train on our account, and while I was in a state bordering on distraction the issue was taken out of my hands—the train started; and now," turning to one of the officials, "this man wants me to believe that she was in the train after all. I am perfectly certain that she was nothing of the kind. What has become of her I don't know, but I'll swear she wasn't in that train."

The amazing part of it was that he never did know what had become of her—the bride had left the bridegroom on the eve of their wedding journey and vanished into space. Unfortunately, there were one or two suspicious circumstances about that vanishing. She had taken her brand-new dressing-case with her, a present from him, which contained all their portable property which was worth having—besides two hundred pounds in English money which was to have been spent upon the honeymoon. Mr. Brookes never saw any of that again. The heavy luggage, which had gone on by the train, was claimed at the Gare du Nord by an individual who produced the checks for it, as well as the keys, which permitted of the Customs examination—and that vanished. The wedding reception had been held at a South Kensington hotel, at which the presents had been exhibited. Before Mr. Brookes got back to it someone called for the presents, armed with a letter from Mrs. Brookes—it seemed that she had made arrangements with the hotel people before she left to hand over the presents to someone who was to call for them—and they were never seen again.

The thing was very well done; Mr. Brookes found that he had been robbed in almost every direction in which he could have been robbed. To an onlooker it had its comical side, but it was a tragedy to him. He told me afterwards that, in one way or another, he reckoned he had been done out of more than a thousand pounds—to say nothing of the wife.

He had gone on one of those cruises which are so in vogue nowadays, to the Norwegian fiords. On the boat was a most charming lady, a Miss Clare Percival. He was a well-to-do bachelor, about forty years of age—the lady struck him as being the wife he had been looking for for years. Affairs of that sort on yachts I believe grow rapidly. Ere long she owned that she liked him, when he asked her; before they reached England—I think it was a twenty-eight-day cruise—the liking had turned to love, or so she said. Three weeks after they were back in London they were married—that episode at Charing Cross Station was the result. The whole affair was decidedly funny—except for the mourning bridegroom.

About eighteen months afterwards I went for a yachting cruise—mine was to the Morocco coast and all sorts of pleasant-sounding places. Our party—we were called a "party"—consisted of about fifty persons. We had not been two days at sea when I had become impressed by two facts. One was that we had on board the proprietor of "Ebenezer's Grey-Blue Pills" and samples of his large and ebullient family, and the other

was that among the passengers was a lady whose appearance had the most singular effect on me. The moment I saw her I had a feeling that I had seen her somewhere before, but for the life of me I could not think where and when.

She was a delightful person; full of resource, skilled in all sorts of what are known as "parlour tricks"; she could sing and recite, tell funny tales, perform conjuring tricks, and play on the piano and the banjo and the fiddle and, what was then the latest craze in musical instruments, the balalaika. She was good at bridge—some of the people said she was the best lady-player they had seen, and her knowledge of the sort of games which are calculated to amuse a general company was simply abnormal. She seemed to have lots of money, and some pretty dresses and some nice jewels. Before we were out of the Bay of Biscay she was the most prominent and popular person on board. By that time she had given people to understand, in a casual kind of way, that she had been an actress, and that she had been a singer, and that she had been an entertainer, and that she had written things and painted things—but I was commencing to wonder if she had ever been Mrs. Everard Brookes.

"I TELL YOU I SAW HER GO THROUGH THE GATE AS CLEARLY AS I SEE YOU NOW."

I frankly admit that the idea first came into my head because of the similarity of the cases; Mrs. Brookes had once been a single lady on a yachting cruise, and here was Marianne Tracy—she took pains to explain exactly how "Marianne" ought to be spelt—occupying precisely the same position. Of course, that was merely a coincidence; lots of single ladies go on yachting cruises, and they are all of them charming and respectable; and beyond that coincidence there was nothing, absolutely nothing. She bore no physical resemblance, from what I remembered, to Mrs. Brookes. I had only seen that lady once, and that was at her wedding, and I had a more or less vague recollection that she had fair hair, which matched her complexion, and that she was tall and slender, and, to my mind, uncomfortably prim; just the colourless sort of person one would expect Mr. Brookes to marry. Miss Tracy was black as night—black hair, black eyes, black eyebrows, and even the faintest shadow of what might be a black moustache. She was no taller than I was, but she was much plumper, and she was full of vivacity and high spirits; and as for prim—I do not wish to do the lady an injustice, but even by abuse of language one could not call her prim. She was hail fellow with everyone on board—the officers, the passengers, the stewards, the crew, and, I dare say, the stokers down below; she had a knack of making friends with everyone with whom she came in contact. Seeing, as I do, a great deal more than many people suppose, I was not a little tickled by some of the conversations in which I saw her take a very active part. She was a flirt. Before we were out of the Bay I believe that most of the male creatures on board, of all sorts and kinds, were under the impression that she was in love with them.

It was that faculty which I possess of seeing so much more than many folks guess which caused my vague suspicion to take, by degrees, a very concrete form. It was the evening on which we were leaving Gibraltar, where we had spent the day. Most gorgeous weather—the sky was ablaze with stars. I was prowling about the ship when, in a corner on the lower deck, I came upon an individual the sight of whom gave me quite a start. He was in a steward's uniform, but I had certainly never seen him on board before. Whatever his duties might be, they had never brought him into the passengers' saloons; I should have recognized him on the instant if they had. His was a face which, once seen by an observant pair of eyes like mine, was not likely to be forgotten, even after a lapse of eighteen months—and that period of time had passed since I had seen him.

The last, and first, time I had beheld that gentleman was at Charing Cross Railway Station on the afternoon on which Mrs. Everard Brookes had disappointed her husband by vanishing on the eve of their honeymoon. He was the individual who had hurried up to a masculine acquaintance and told him, right in front of me, that someone feminine had "done a bunk all right," and was "away with the best of the swag"; and had handed him what he called "her brief," and which had seemed to me to be a Continental railway-ticket. There was no mistaking those freckles and that flaming moustache—or, indeed, the man as a whole.

My surprise at seeing him there was so great that for some seconds I did not realize whom he was talking to; then I saw that it was Miss Marianne Tracy; and, as I watched what they were saying, I began to understand. He said to her:—

"The best of the old girl's things he takes care of; those diamonds and pearls which we got the office about, which the old girl flashes around, are in a bag which he keeps in his locker. Some of the girls' things are in it too; I dropped into the cabin as if by accident the other morning, and I saw him put them into his bag."

The man winked at her when he said "by accident"; I have no doubt that Miss Tracy grasped his meaning. I had had no intention of playing the spy—I had made no attempt to conceal myself; so that when Miss Tracy looked round, as she did just at that moment, she saw me at once. With perfect presence of mind she came straight up to me.

"Taking a stroll about the ship, Miss Lee?"

I do not know what possessed me; I do sometimes yield to impulse, and I did then. This person did seem to me to be such an impudent piece of goods that, without counting the cost, I felt bound to have a shot at her—and I did then and there. I looked her very straight in the face, and with what I am sure was the most perfect civility I asked her a question.

"Aren't you Mrs. Everard Brookes?"

She did not change countenance—the baggage! She must have had a front of brass. She just looked at me inquiringly, and she smiled, and she said:—

"So! We have met before, Miss Lee!"

She put her lips together, and she gave a

tiny little whistle; it was scarcely audible, but I fancy it was heard by someone, because, without a moment's warning, someone, stealing on me from behind, put something over my head which blocked out all the light and made it difficult for me to breathe, and I was dragged down backwards on to the deck. I would have screamed when I got there, only a hand was pressed against my mouth, on the outside of the stuff which covered my face, and I could not utter a sound. The same hand held me down tight, another took me by the throat and almost choked me, while a second pair of hands took hold of my wrists and tied them together, and then did the same to my ankles. I could not struggle, because the pressure on my mouth and throat seemed to be driving the sense all out of me. Then two hands were slipped under the cloth, my jaw was forced open, something was thrust into it—and there was I as helpless as a trussed fowl, and incapable of uttering a sound.

I am free to admit that it was very well done, evidently by persons who had done that sort of thing before. I had not the use of my eyes, but, if I could trust my ears, not a word was spoken nor an instant wasted. Presently two pairs of hands lifted me by the head and heels; I was carried a few feet, and deposited under what I have no doubt was cover, and there I remained for I have not the faintest notion how long. And in the cabin, as I was perfectly aware, they were waiting for me to make a four at bridge. I could picture Miss Tracy explaining how I had been overcome by a sudden headache, and how I had asked her, with their permission, to take my place; and as I continued to lie in that ignominious position I have no doubt that the creature who had been chiefly instrumental in putting me there was playing my hands.

Time passed; the hours went by—they seemed to me years—and as I was wondering if I had become an old woman and my hair had turned grey, I was lifted again by two pairs of hands, though I had not heard a sound of anyone approaching. I was carried this time some distance; a rope was tied round my waist, and immediately afterwards I became pleasantly conscious that I was being lowered over the side of the ship. I took it for granted that my two friends, desirous of avoiding the noise of a splash, had adopted this method of dropping me into the sea. I feared my end had come, and was momentarily expecting to come in contact with the water, when I went plump against something solid instead, and on what I had bumped against I stayed. The tension of the rope ceased. I was being lowered no longer; apparently I was on, or in, something. I suppose I was there some minutes before I discovered that the ligature which bound my wrists together was not so taut as it had been, and it did not take me very long after the discovery was made to wriggle both my hands loose. Then I put them up and pulled that covering off my head and face. I found it was a canvas-bag which had contained something undesirable, because my eyes, and nostrils, and mouth were full of grits, and something gritty was worrying my hair and skin. I took the gag out of my mouth; they had actually used a piece of cotton waste. Then I sat up, and I learned that I was in a small boat, which was all alone on what—literally to me—was a trackless ocean. My sensations on making this discovery were of the most exhilarating kind. I would have cried if I had thought it would do any good. As a matter of fact, I was consumed with rage; my one craving was to get that freckled man and that false woman by their throats, one hand at the throat of each, and knock, knock, knock their heads together; there would not have been much left of them if I had had a chance of knocking them together then. I would have just smashed them up like egg-shells.

I nursed my pleasant dreams of being revenged on them for quite a while. Then I untied my ankles, got on the one seat in the boat, and looked around. There was nothing to see, except water; and there was too much of that. I must have been lying for hours with that disgusting bag over my head, because it was clear, from the appearance of the heavens, that the dawn was on the point of breaking. It did break; I floated on, and on, and on. All of a sudden I saw something straight in front of me which caused me to get on to my feet and stare with all my might.

It was land—I believed it was land; I was sure it was land. It was ever so far away; but if I only had—then I realized that there was a pair of oars on board that boat. Whether that pretty couple had put them there on purpose, with the intention of giving me a chance to save my life, I have never known—but there they were. Presently I put them in the rowlocks, and I was pulling for dear life. I can row, but never before or since have I rowed as I rowed then. I sincerely hope I shall never have such a long pull again. I reached land, or I should not be telling the story. When I did I just

lay down and felt as if I were as good as dead. If there had been so much as a ripple on the sea, I doubt if I should ever have gained the shore at all—my strength was utterly spent; but not only was the sea as calm as a millpond, but I have been told since that there is a strong current in that part of the world which sets towards the land. No doubt that helped to carry me in as much as my straining at the oars.

"NEITHER SIDE UNDERSTOOD A WORD OF WHAT THE OTHER SIDE SAID."

I want to get over this part of the story as fast as possible. I don't like to think of it even now. After a while I became conscious that people were standing by and looking down at me. I never knew quite who they were, but I suppose they were Moors, because I had got ashore in Morocco. They could not speak English, and I could not speak what they spoke, so neither side understood a word of what the other side said; but I followed them, because a man took me by the wrist and made me go to a disreputable-looking sort of village, which I dare say an artist would have called picturesque; but I like my villages to be clean and wholesome, and that certainly was not. There I met an old man who had some English, of rather a curious kind; he must have acquired it in some strange company, because every third or fourth word was an oath; still, it was better than nothing. I knew, of course, that the yacht was making for Tangier, and I asked him how far that was. As far as I could gather from what he said, it was about six months' journey; but I did not believe it was anything of the kind, because I knew that the yacht expected to get there early

that day, and in that cockle-shell of a boat I could not possibly have gone very far out of its course.

As a matter of fact it was four days before I reached Tangier. The sight I must have presented when I got there! I walked nearly all the way. I had never had a wash, or been able to brush or comb my hair—considering when I was lowered into that small boat I was in full evening-dress. I had on a costume of sky-blue satin covered with chiffon, the corsage cut low, no sleeves, a pair of blue silk stockings to match, and the flimsiest of shoes. When you have got those details clearly in your mind, and remember that I had spent a night at sea, rowing in a small boat, and that afterwards I walked for four days on the roads of Morocco, without once coming within sight of soap or water, brush or comb, I don't think I need say any more of what I looked like when I reached Tangier.

I created a sensation when I did get there; for that matter, I created a sensation all along the road. I was the centre of a highly-amused mob of the inhabitants of the place, when, of all people in the world, who should I encounter but the proprietor of Ebenezer's Grey-Blue Pills, his wife, his son, his two daughters, together with other passengers from the yacht which I had so unintentionally quitted. And they fell on me all at once, not with sympathy, but with accusations of robbery and theft.

We all adjourned to the house of the British Consul, and half the population of the town seemed to be waiting in the street without. There I was informed that jewels, and other valuables, belonging to John T. Stebbings, had been taken out of his cabin on the night I had gone, and everyone took it for granted that they had gone with me. So there I was, charged with leaving that yacht of set purpose and intention, with no end of valuables belonging to other people.

Looking back, I find that I have omitted something; it comes back to my mind at this moment just as it did then. It is not very much—just a trifle; but one of those trifles which turn the scale.

As, on that eventful night, Miss Marianne Tracy looked round and beheld me, she was in the very act of saying something to her freckled friend. I only saw her lips form part of the sentence; how it began I do not know, and it never ended. The words I saw her lips form were only these:—

"... the Villa Hortense, in the Street of the Fountain——"

In the excitement of the thrilling moment which immediately ensued I think I scarcely realized that those words had reached my brain—anyhow, I should not have known to what they referred. But in that room in the Consul's house, confronted by my accusers, they came back to me. I even had some inkling of what they might mean.

I told my tale. They listened with an amazement which grew; then, when I had come nearly to an end, and I felt that I had made some sort of impression, I asked the Consul a question:—

"Is there in this town a Street of the Fountain?"

He said there was; he ventured on a statement, eyeing me sharply.

"You have been here before—this is not your first visit to Tangier?"

I told him not only that it was, but that I hoped it would be my last. I explained the circumstances in which I had seen the words uttered. How he stared, and how they all stared, as if I were some wonderful creature! It is a continual source of amusement to me how many people think I am doing something wonderful when I am merely putting into practice the principles by the teaching of which I make my living.

"I understand," I added, "that Miss Tracy left the yacht the night before last, to spend a day or two ashore. I think it possible that you will find she prefers to remain ashore when the yacht goes." I put another question to the Consul: "Do you happen to know, sir, if in the Street of the Fountain there is a house called the Villa Hortense?"

"By repute I know it very well. It is a house which, at various times, has had some curious occupants—persons of whom somewhat queer tales have been told. I believe that at the present moment it is without a tenant."

"I venture, in spite of your belief, sir, to express my belief that if Mr. John T. Stebbings would like to learn something about the jewels belonging to Mrs. Stebbings and the Misses Stebbings, he cannot do better than make inquiries at the Villa Hortense, in the Street of the Fountain."

They all trooped off to that poetically-named street; I tried to get it into their heads that that was not the most desirable way of making what ought to have been a discreet approach. Each was willing that someone else should stay behind, but was bent on going him or her self. So they all of them went together. Someone, I do not know who, had lent me an aboriginal sort of wrap which I believe was called a burnous;

that covered the worst of me, but there was still enough of me visible to make me one of the most striking figures in that singular procession.

The Street of the Fountain proved to be very narrow, so the procession had to tail off, whether it wished to or not. From the outside the Villa Hortense seemed to be quite a good-sized house. While people were wondering how we were going to get in I turned the handle and opened the door. The door led directly into a room. As I entered I saw a feminine figure passing through a door which was on the other side. Although she looked quite different, I knew that she was Miss Marianne Tracy. As I made a dash at her she shut the door with a bang, I heard a key turned in the lock, and bolts shot home. As the door was a solid construction, apparently six inches thick, my desire to get through it had to be postponed. Others had come in after me, and they were eyeing with surprise the contents of the room—which certainly were rather amazing. There were articles of clothing which had undoubtedly belonged to Miss Tracy, and what is known as a "transformation," which had probably belonged to her too, to say nothing of some odds and ends of an extremely intimate kind. The great discovery was made by Mrs. Stebbings and her two daughters; they dashed forward with a chorused cry: "Father's bag!"

There, on a sort of stool, was the bag which Mr. Stebbings had kept in his locker, and which had contained the most valuable possessions of the feminine part of the family. There were some of them left still—what the family seemed to regard as unconsidered trifles; the articles really worth having were there no more. They had probably gone with the lady who had locked and bolted—on the other side—that extremely solid door. While we were assimilating this interesting fact a person garbed as a sailor appeared in the doorway and informed us, at the top of his voice, that if we wanted to continue our yachting cruise we had better get on board at once, as the boat was on the point of starting.

There was a nice to-do. Everyone seemed to be strongly of the opinion that the captain was an exceptionally unreasonable person; but, as no one wished to be left behind, a common inclination was shown to rush to the shore. As nobody was more eager to get on board than I was, for divers reasons, I kept well to the front. We reached the quay just as the ship's boat was about to put off, and I was the first one in. They all came tumbling after me. We discussed the captain's conduct on the way to the ship, and we kept on discussing it to the end of the voyage. He was tried by a sort of court-martial, no two members of which agreed.

Mr., Mrs., the Misses, and Master Stebbings were of opinion that the captain ought to have kept the ship at Tangier while search was made for that disreputable woman, and at least endeavoured to recover their valuable property. As the ship had stayed there already much longer than she ought to have done, the captain made it quite clear that his first duty was to the owners, and that if the Stebbings family had wished to remain they might have done so and come on by another ship. But as their remaining property was on board and they had only a few pounds on their persons, it was not strange that they had not seen their way to act on the captain's suggestion. Mrs. Stebbings asked him pointedly if he thought she could live for a fortnight in the clothes she stood up in, and the young ladies hinted that he was not the kind of person they had taken him for. So the captain retired, and I should not be surprised if he bullied the crew. I believe efforts were made by wireless to ascertain the woman's whereabouts and to regain the Stebbingses' gems, and that directions were given to leave no stone unturned which should bring these things about. But, so far as I know, nothing ever came of what was done.

The yachting cruise went on, under a sort of blight. Everything seemed different without Miss Tracy and the Stebbingses' gems. The numerous inquisitions which were held on me, and the myriad questions which I had to answer, caused me seriously to consider whether it would not be desirable to remain at one of the ports at which we touched and continue my journey later. But the truth was that I had had enough of yachting, and the one thing for which I craved was to have done with that pleasure trip and get back home. I did get back home—we all got back home—and I think that most of us parted from each other in the hope that we might never meet again.

This story is episodical, with an interval between each episode. There was another interval of about eighteen months, during which I managed to keep myself alive, though, for the most part, I was badly overworked; and one afternoon I went to call upon a friend who was staying at the Hotel Metropole in town. I stayed in the lounge while she went to write some letters. Right on the other side was a party of Americans.

They seemed to be so much amused by what they were talking about that I could not help watching them, and I saw one of them tell this story. He struck me as a man who had been in this world about sixty years, and who had lived them every one.

"Have I told you about Alexander King?"

He asked the question, and with one accord his listeners said that he had not; so he told them then.

"Last fall Alexander went on a pleasure cruise to the coast of Florida. On board there was a lady—I don't mean that there weren't other ladies on the ship, but she was the only one for Alexander. Alexander had had three wives already, and he told me himself that he thought enough was as good as a feast; but the sight of her made him think he'd try again. All the way there and back he made hay of that young female's heart to such an extent that, when he got back to New York, nothing would suit him but that he should rush off to the first handy place, and make her the fourth Mrs. King. But she was not taking any; she was a modest creature, and wanted time to prepare her mind. So he gave her time, as little as she would let him give her, and he spent most of it in buying such articles as New York had to sell; so that when they had the wedding he had quite a nice collection to pour into the lap of his bride. They were going to Tennessee for the honeymoon, and they went down to the depôt, and they boarded the train. And just before the train was going to start she remembered that she had forgotten something somewhere, and she caught up a bag which contained all he had worth having, as well as some trifles of her own, and she started off to get it. And she left Alexander alone in the train—and he's been alone ever since. Yes, boys, he has. That train started with Alexander alone in it, without even his bag. She had recommended him, like a good and thoughtful wife, careful of her husband's interests, to put all his cash into that bag, and everything he had worth taking; and he had acted on her advice, and now the bag was gone, and she with it. That's the last he's ever seen of either. Yes, boys, that's a fact. What honeymoon he had he spent all alone, which didn't amount to much; and, from what I have heard, it would seem that he has been spending most of the money he had left on telegraphing descriptions of the bag and the lady to every part of the world. He has met with no success so far, and I take it that his money will give out before he does. So he's a widower once more."

"AS I MADE A DASH AT HER SHE SHUT THE DOOR WITH A BANG."

His hearers laughed, and I had to laugh—he had such a comical way of telling a story—but I laughed with rather a wry face. I had no doubt that Mrs. Everard Brookes, and Miss Marianne Tracy, and Mrs. Alexander King were one and the same person. The audacity of the creature was almost incredible! I believe I should have gone across to them and told them so, only just then my friend came up and insisted upon bearing me off without giving me a chance to explain.

A few days afterwards I was in Bond Street, when a beautifully-attired lady came out of a shop, and stopped to stare at me. I could not believe my eyes—it was Marianne Tracy, though transformed into quite another being. Her coolness was almost supernatural.

"It is Miss Lee, isn't it? I thought it was. I'm so glad to have met you."

That was all she said, in the sweetest tone of voice. Then she got into a gorgeous motor-car, which I had been conscious had been standing at the kerb, and as she pulled the door to she leaned over and said:—

"By the way, how did you enjoy that little trip to sea?"

Before I could answer the car was off. What was I to do? I could not run after it; it was lost in the traffic before I had got my wits about me. I could not give a description of the car—I had scarcely noticed it; I was not sure either of the shape or colour. That woman had slipped through my fingers, merely because her presence of mind was greater than mine. If I had only kept my head enough to take her by the throat in the middle of Bond Street!

"BY THE WAY, HOW DID YOU ENJOY THAT LITTLE TRIP TO SEA?"

A week afterwards I had a call from Mr. Everard Brookes. He began to talk about his wife—he still called her his wife. The man struck me as being more than half a lunatic. He told me that he had more than once thought of going into mourning. The very notion! I thought of what her feelings would have been if she had seen him in widower's weeds. He said that he felt that in the first flush of his agitation he had misjudged her; he was sure that she had cared for him; he had had proofs of it. I wonder what they were. He was nearly convinced that she had been the victim of one of those tragedies of which one reads in the newspapers; she might have been run over by a motor-bus; he had a morbid feeling that he himself would one day be run over by a vehicle of that description. Something had happened to her, he believed; one day it would be made known what it was.

I hoped that it never would, for his sake. He was one of those men who—because nothing ever has happened to them—like to think that something has happened to them at last—something wonderful, altogether out of the common way; that they have been the victim of some supreme tragedy. I doubt if he would have made much of a husband, anyhow. He was actually happy under the delusion that some strange, mysterious fate had in some altogether incomprehensible way robbed him of what might have been his life's bright star. His existence might have been so blissful had Destiny only stayed its hand. It is my belief that he endeavoured to make this clear to everybody he met after five minutes' acquaintance; so that, if he lost his wife before she was really his, at least he had an object in life.

The next morning I met William B. Stebbings, the son of Ebenezer's Grey-Blue Pills, and, as soon as he had made up his mind who I was, the very first words he said to me were:—

"I say, Miss Lee, I'm going to be married—yes, I am; and I hope to see you there; you must have a card. It's on Tuesday week." Then, though we were out in the open street, he closed his left eye and winked. "Have you ever heard anything of Miss Tracy? She was a dandy of a girl, she was; and, between ourselves, I believe that she didn't object to me. If it hadn't been for that little upset, matters between us might have gone farther than—— Well, strictly between ourselves, I don't mind telling you that she told me herself that she would like to be my wife; she meant it, too. She was fond of me, that girl was. Pity she made such a mistake."

I did not know to which mistake he alluded, and I did not ask him. I did not want to know. He was an extremely plain, clumsily-built, stupid young man; and I was half inclined to wish that she had married him. Where women are concerned, men are the most amazing things. What all those men, of different ages, different tastes, different altogether, saw in her was beyond my comprehension. The proof that she had a fatal fascination for the male animal came to me in still stranger shape only a few days later.

I was standing in one of the Tube stations, when a decently-dressed young man came up to me and took his cap off.

"Excuse me, but aren't you Miss Lee? I don't suppose you know who I am, but I remember you because of Miss Balfour."

"Miss who?" I asked. I was quite certain I had never seen him before; he was almost a gentleman and quite nice-looking, about twenty-three or four.

"Miss Balfour spoke to you in Bond Street, now rather more than a fortnight since. You were passing when she came out of a shop and spoke to you, and then she got into the motor-car. I was the chauffeur. She told me afterwards who you were."

"So she calls herself Miss Balfour now, does she?" A light was beginning to dawn on me. "I shall be very much obliged if you can tell me where Miss Balfour is to be found at the present moment."

He pulled rather a long face.

"I wish I could; that is what I hoped you would be able to tell me."

"No one is less likely to be able to tell you about the movements of the woman who, according to you, now calls herself Miss Balfour than I am. Are you no longer in her employ?"

He shifted his cap a little to one side and scratched his head. I thought what a rueful-looking object he was all at once.

"Well, it's rather a long story. It's like this." He paused, as if to try back to the beginning. "I wasn't exactly in her employ; the fact is, an uncle of mine left me a legacy, and I laid it out in buying a motor-car, meaning to hire it out to people who wanted one. It's a first-rate car, and I wanted to get at people of better class. Miss Balfour hired it—first by the day, then by the week, and then by the month. We used to go off together for tours in the country, and"—he began to look sheepish—"she made herself very pleasant to me. Of course, she paid my expenses, and nothing would suit her but that we should take our meals together—late

dinner and all that; and—well"—he looked more sheepish—"she began to make out that she had taken a liking to me, and, of course, I liked her; so then I gave her the motor-car."

"You did what?" I almost shouted in that Tube station.

"You see, we were going to be married——"

"Oh, you were going to be married!"

"Of course; I knew she'd got lots of money, and that it would be a first-rate thing for me, and so I thought, there being only one thing I could give her worth having, that was the least I could give her, so I gave her the motor-car, thinking," he quickly added, "that, as what was hers would be mine, it would make no difference, and that it would be as much mine as ever; only the mischief was I gave it her before witnesses; and that very same night, if she didn't get up in the middle of the night, and go down to the garage, and take the car out, and drive off with it, and I've seen nothing of either of them since."

This was such an astounding story that if it had not been for the sincere air of depression which marked the man I should have thought that he was having a joke at my expense; but he was serious enough, as he had good reason to be.

"It was no use my going after her, even if I had known where she was, because, of course, she hadn't stolen the motor-car, seeing that I had given it to her in the presence of witnesses—and that's how it was."

"Do you mean to say you've lost your motor-car?"

"It looks as if I had. I did hear by a sort of side-wind that she's taken it to France, but, seeing that it's hers, I don't see what I can do to her if she has. She's had me fairly. It was one of the best motor-cars that money could buy; I didn't grudge anything in the way of fittings."

He sighed. My train came up, and I left the youth lamenting. He was only another example of what absolute idiots all sorts and conditions of men, old and young, can make themselves over a woman.

It was not very long afterwards that a letter reached me which bore the Paris post-mark. As a specimen of—I will call it courage—I give it verbatim. There was no date and there was no address.

"My dear Miss Lee—may I call you Judith?——"

It was at this point that I realized that the letter was from that woman. Might she call me Judith! I read on—with my teeth set pretty close together.

"When I saw you the other day in Regent Street—I don't know if you saw me; I was in a motor-car and you were walking—quite a wave of emotion passed over me. It was so sweet to see again one of whom one has such sunny memories. And you were looking so well; a little older, perhaps, but a few years more or less would make no difference to your appearance. I should have liked to stop my motor-car and begged you to have a cup of tea. I cannot help sending you just a line to say so, if only to recall to your recollection one who I hope you look upon as an old friend.

"A great change is about to take place in my life. I am shortly to be married—to a Russian merchant of immense wealth. One has to be married some time. I wonder if you will ever be? There are men who will marry anything—who knows?

"I had no idea until the other day that you were the famous Judith Lee. It was a surprise. I had heard so much about you—about how wise and clever and wonderful you were. You are not in the least like what I expected. And yet how beautiful it must be to be able to read people's thoughts, even the secrets of their hearts, as I am told you can. Who would have thought it? I shall look forward to meeting you again some day, in order that you may teach me some of the strange magic—I am bound to call it magic—of which you are such a mistress. You will find me an apt pupil; don't you think you will?

"You must be able to do a great deal of good in the world with such a gift as yours. I love doing good—don't you? It must be so nice to detect an improper person directly you see one. Your friendship for me was almost a certificate of character. If only it had not been so brief—but the night was fine, and the boat was handy, and we did not tie you very tight.—Your affectionate friend, MARIANNE TRACY.

"Pray remember me to the gentleman whose name you once mentioned to me—Mr. Everard Brookes. Is he married?"

The audacity of the woman in writing to me at all! And such a letter, with such innuendoes! I could hardly contain myself till I got to the end. For quite two days after I had received that effusion I could hardly bring myself to speak civilly to a single person I came across. And even now sometimes I tingle all over when I think of it—and that was ages ago, and I have never heard of nor seen the woman since.

NO. 1.—THE BUTTERFLY VIOLA.

NO. 3.—THE EUPEPIA, OR SHELL-FLOWER.

NO. 2.—A NEW TYPE OF PEACOCK FLOWER—THE ALTERARIA.

FLOWERS OF THE FUTURE.

By R. B. VAUGHAN.

IT is a truly astonishing thing to reflect that Shakespeare, for all his love of flowers, would have been able to name scarcely a single bloom in a twentieth-century garden. He would hardly have been able to distinguish the queen of flowers itself, so greatly has the rose changed in the last three centuries; while as for the begonias, the chrysanthemums, the dahlias, the geraniums, the fuchsias, and carnations, these were unknown even to our great-grandfathers, who would have regarded them with wonder and delight.

For many of our most beautiful flowers are purely modern productions, and three centuries ago there were no flower-gardens in England. What were then thought of as gardens were herbaria, places where rosemary, mint, rue, thyme, and sage grew, and perhaps a few primitive blooms, such as violets and primroses, were suffered to exist, much as poppies and cornflowers do to-day.

Only about a quarter of a century old is the science of floriculture which has so completely altered our gardens, and is still so altering the forms and colours of familiar flowers as in many cases to render them entirely new species. The flowers of to-day are the result of cross-breeding, stimulated by electricity, drugs, and hot-water baths. Hundreds of expert botanists are by these methods engaged in breeding new flowers or new forms of old ones in the gardens and hot-houses of Europe and America; and in this article I propose to foreshadow a few of the forms which the next twenty years may bring to light.

In a number of instances surprising effects could be produced by working upon the markings rather than the form of the flowers. Particularly is this so in the case of the calceolaria.

Much might be done with the markings of numerous forms of violas. There is, unfortunately, a certain amount of difficulty in persuading the colours of many of the viola family to come true from seed, but it is only a matter of time for floricultural skill to overcome this. Slight variations of the forms of the petals will then lead to many new varieties, of which the peacock viola may be taken as typical.

Anyone who has noticed the beautiful little *viola cornuta* and some of the other smaller violas will realize that no great forward movement is necessary to produce the butterfly viola, from which the shell form will be rapidly developed.

These effects may be seen in the illustrations Nos. 1, 2, and 3.

In my opinion, there is a great deal in a name, only, as Shakespeare observed, not intrinsically. It is the associations which cluster around the name of a particular flower which often make floriculturists hesitate to change it, even though the flower itself is completely altered, and bears less relation to its ancestor than a thoroughbred racehorse bears to a donkey. But poetry has already taken cognizance of the fuchsia (named from Herr Fuchs) and the dahlia (named from M. Dahl), and if the sweet-pea would only revert to its old name of peas-blossom it deserves also to bloom in lyrics and sonnets, as do the violet, mignonette, and pansy. The carnation is a far more beautiful flower than any Shakespeare or Milton, or even Shelley, Keats, and Byron, ever beheld, while the same may be said of begonias and chrysanthemums, and perhaps other modern blooms. So that when the poets have long enough sung the praises of the flowers we know, the cyclamens, the calceolarias, gloxinias, nicotiana, petunias, and zinnias, they will become quite as sentimentally classical as all those inferior flowers which bloom much more exquisitely in literature than they do in the garden. Thus the rose by any other name would smell as sweet—but would the mignonette or the violet?

In writing of the flowers of the future, chance discoveries have always to be reckoned with—any day a gardener may hit upon some entirely new form—but the chief changes will be brought about through the gradual evolution now in process.

Many well-known plants have been developed from specimens discovered in various parts of the world, and there is no doubt that a number of charming novelties are still lurking undiscovered in remote spots. The chances of valuable finds are, however, becoming unfortunately less every year. A small army of collectors is always at work in every corner of the world, searching for new treasures to enrich our floral store. From South America came, many years ago, the recently unfashionable fuchsia; from the hills of Northern India and Tibet have been brought many useful varieties; from China we have had, amongst other things, many new primulas; Japan has yielded wonderful irises; Africa many varied plants usually of most brilliant and gorgeous colouring; while numerous charming members of the narcissus family have been discovered as near home as the Pyrenees.

But this cannot continue indefinitely, and even in the realm of orchids, for which, perhaps, the most systematic search of all is made, there is not much left to be explored. For our future novelties we shall have to rely, then, chiefly on the skill of our hybridists, who are constantly engaged in mating different species of the same family of plants, and our cross-fertilizers, who are doing similar work with different varieties of the same species.

Their work is slow and necessarily tedious. A long time must result in many cases before the hybrid plant is brought to the flowering stage and the result of the cross is known. Often it is found that there is no result at all, and that, so far as that particular experiment is concerned, many months have been wasted. For there is no definite rule as to the probability of two species fusing. Mr. W. P. Wright, the well-known writer on horticultural subjects, tells us, in his "Dictionary of Practical Gardening," "Species which are apparently widely separated from each other will cross quite readily, and others which are apparently quite closely related to each other will obstinately refuse to cross. The whole question of sexual affinity is involved, and at present much is more or less conjecture.

"The hybridist, however, is working upon strictly scientific grounds," he continues. "He does not hybridize for the sake of hybridizing, or merely at random; and his *confrère*, the cross-breeder, is equally exact. Each has an ideal in view, and he selects the parents of the progeny with careful skill. Thus the microscope is not infrequently called into play to ascertain whether the grains of pollen from a particular plant are plump, clean, and well-shaped, before that plant is selected as the male parent, and if the pollen does not satisfy those conditions the plant is discarded."

Luckily, however, we are not left entirely to the unaided efforts of mankind to provide us with new horticultural delights; for Nature herself realizes that constant change is needed, and is continually striving to assist these experimenters. For no apparent reason a sudden variation or "sport" will appear on some particular plant, which is seized upon and preserved by any enthusiastic floriculturist who is fortunate enough to

come across it. Thus a new starting-point is provided, and an endless range of experiments becomes possible.

Perhaps the most striking example of this is provided by the well-known Shirley poppies. The Rev. W. Wilks, the late vicar of Shirley, in Surrey, who is now the secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society, was one day looking at a field scarlet with poppies, when he noticed one particular plant whose flowers were marked with white. Being a clever and enthusiastic gardener, he quickly realized the possibilities of his discovery. The plant was taken home, its seed carefully saved, and from this small beginning the popular Shirley poppies, as they are now known, were raised.

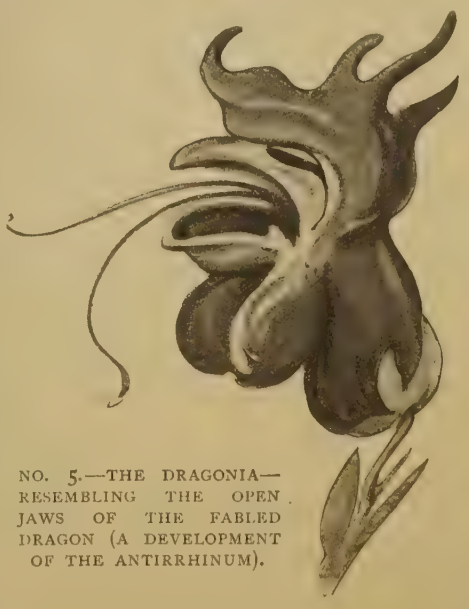
NO. 4.—THE VERONICA'S DEVELOPMENT. NOTE THE PORTRAIT — THE "VERA ICON."

Although these processes sound fairly simple, many difficulties have to be overcome by the exercise of skill and patience. Even when some striking improvement has been brought about, it cannot be exhibited as a new variety until it has been "fixed"—that is to say, until it can be relied upon to reproduce itself, and itself only, from seed. This is a process which in many cases takes years to complete, the seeds being saved and grown year after year, until nothing but the true form is produced. There are at the present time many new varieties of various plants in the hands of growers, undergoing this selective process, which during the next few years will appear as novelties.

One of the most novel and interesting—one might almost write, the most startling—evolutions will take place in the modest little veronica, or speedwell (No. 4). Most people are aware that upon the delicate blue petals of this little flower is "impressed" the face of our Lord—only a faint and imperfect suggestion of the face, the two eyes enclosed in the "M," recording the word "OMO." We are further told that "the devout religionist of the Middle Ages, fancying he discerned the very face of his Lord gazing at him from the tiny azure flower, exclaimed, 'It is indeed the Vera Icon!'" Why should not this dim, imperfect portrait be rendered by floricultural science more distinct, for all lovers of flowers and of legend to see? And this before long will be done in the manner I have given in the accompanying illustration.

All of us are familiar from childhood with the snapdragon species, the antirrhinums. Can we ever forget the first impressions of the startling resemblance of some of these flowers to the open jaws of the fabled dragon? This fascinating grotesqueness will be increased in some of the forthcoming varieties, until we come to a flower which resembles the illustration on this page (No. 5).

The begonia is a flower which may be grown by almost anyone anywhere, and which has of late become increasingly popular. As it has become more widely grown, so it has been altered and improved until to-day many of its numerous varieties may almost be mistaken for different flowers. There are begonias now which at first sight look like camellias, and others which are not far removed in appearance from roses, while the latest additions are the fringed and the basket forms. There is every chance that this progress will continue, and we shall before long have a large double-fringed begonia, as far removed from the present forms as they are from the varieties of twenty or thirty years ago. In appearance it will probably be something like a Japanese chrysanthemum, but with petals which are much more irregular and of a very different texture. Then the hanging forms will be developed, until we have baskets covered with enormous fringed blooms in all their wonderful colourings.



NO. 5.—THE DRAGONIA—RESEMBLING THE OPEN JAWS OF THE FABLED DRAGON (A DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANTIRRHINUM).

NO. 6.—A FUTURE FORM OF THE CALCEOLARIA—THE TIGERIA.

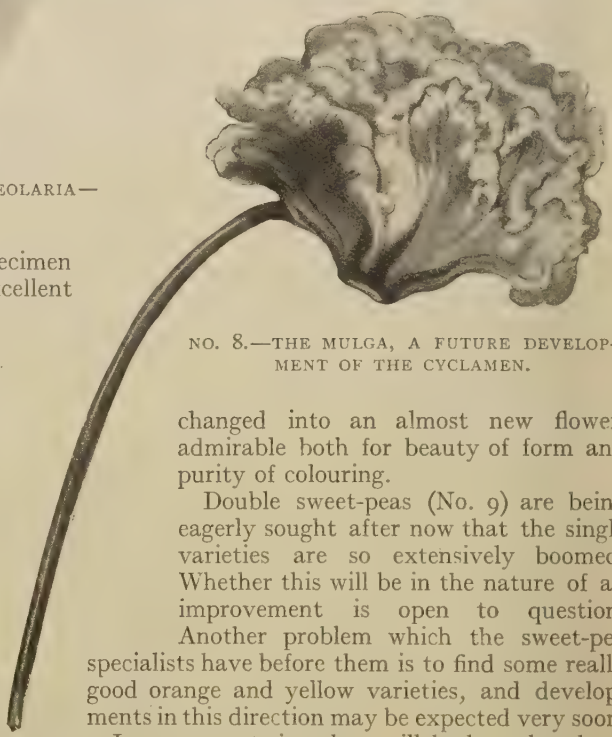
The above illustration shows a specimen of calceolaria developed into an excellent representation of a tiger's head. No. 6 will be recognized as no more fantastic than many of the finer varieties to be seen in our present-day conservatories. The small outdoor varieties also assume some striking forms, and the "old-woman calceolaria" depicted below (No. 7) may already be found in many gardens.

Another class of plants in which we may expect to see some astonishing changes are those which have only recently been introduced to this country.

NO. 7.—THE VIEILLE, A BIZARRE FORM OF CALCEOLARIA.

Foremost amongst these we may place the gerbera, or Transvaal daisy. Soon we shall probably have a double form of this flower, which may be expected to be something like a pyrethrum, but much lighter and more graceful. Its wonderful orange and orange-scarlet colouring will make it a most valuable addition to our gardens.

Perhaps the most beautiful of all the prospective additions to our stock of plants will be the double-fringed cyclamen (No. 8). There is already a fringed or fimbriated variety which is almost semi-double, and which will soon, in the hands of floriculturists, be

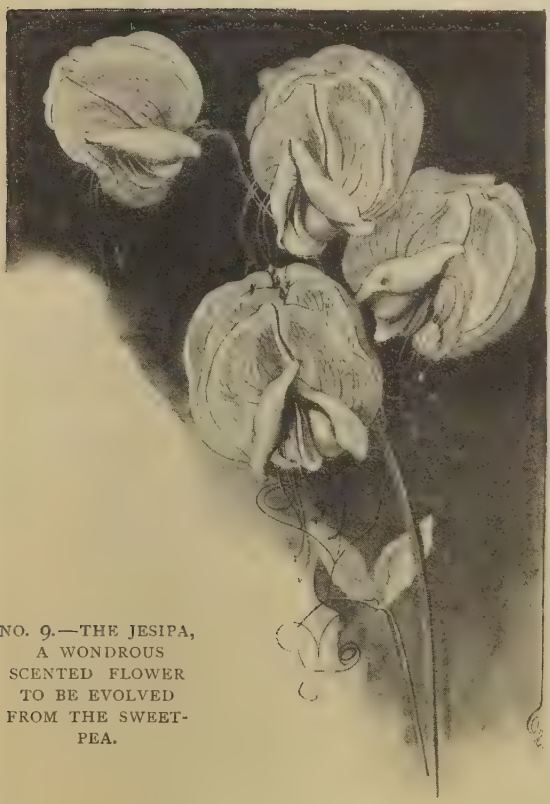


NO. 8.—THE MULGA, A FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CYCLAMEN.

changed into an almost new flower, admirable both for beauty of form and purity of colouring.

Double sweet-peas (No. 9) are being eagerly sought after now that the single varieties are so extensively boomed. Whether this will be in the nature of an improvement is open to question. Another problem which the sweet-pea specialists have before them is to find some really good orange and yellow varieties, and developments in this direction may be expected very soon.

Improvements in colour will be brought about in many flowers. The announcement of the production of a true blue rose now occasions very little surprise, although the actuality still remains a vision of the future. Roses have, however, been produced which are astonishingly near a genuine blue in colour, and it is probably only a matter of time for a good blue seedling to be raised from one of these. Other plants amongst which the search for new colours is being actively pursued are freesias, of which we shall soon have, in all probability, a purple form, with lemon-yellow stripes; cinerarias, which it is quite likely will be produced in orange and yellow shades; and amaryllis, which is quite possible in a pure white form. There is room, too, for some good orange-coloured double roses, which shade is only to be met with amongst the single varieties.



NO. 9.—THE JESIPA, A WONDROUS SCENTED FLOWER TO BE EVOLVED FROM THE SWEET-PEA.

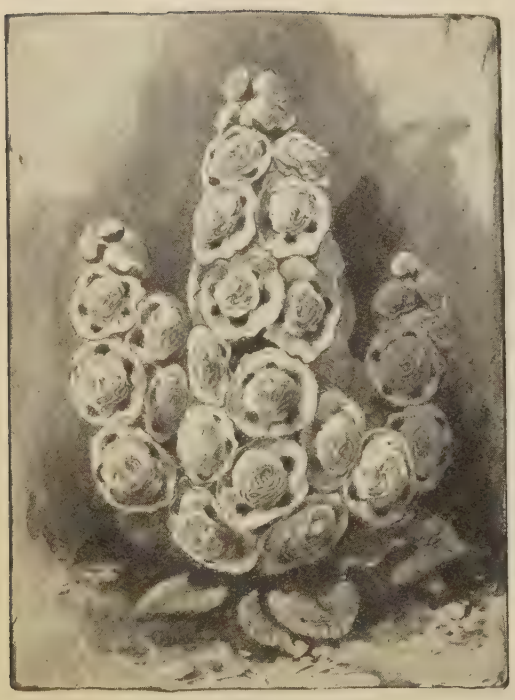
Fashion plays an extremely important part in determining what new plants shall be produced. Thirty years ago fuchsias were to be found in great variety in every garden, but for many years now they have been out of fashion. Lately there are signs of their return to popularity, and possibly this may bring about improvements in them. When widely cultivated in the past, they were altered to such an extent that further improvement upon the same lines was almost impossible. A new generation of floriculturists with new ideas, returning to the simple form of the original fuchsias, may develop the plant along entirely new lines.

In this is probably to be found the explanation of the opinion of the Rev. W. Wilks, who considers that the immediate future will witness a return to popularity of simpler forms of flowers—forms approaching more nearly to the wild state. Is it not possible that floricultural skill has reached the full extent of its powers with many flowers in their present forms, and that popular taste, anxious for something new, turns naturally to the more simple forms as providing a fresh starting point for the development of an entirely new series of varieties? Take, for instance, the case of the dahlia. There are several widely differing forms, in each of which little change is possible; but there is no reason why, starting with the simple single dahlia, many new families should not be introduced. For example, many single dahlias have decidedly reflexed petals. It would not require a great amount of cultivation to render these petals larger and more curved back upon themselves, thus forming a sort of pumpkin flower.

Chrysanthemum-petals have already been made to assume an almost infinite variety of shapes and habits, and a striking effect could easily be produced by cultivating a combination of these forms with incurved centre and reflexed outer petals. If a variety having a pink centre shading to white at the edges were chosen for this experiment, it would at first sight be difficult, without examining the foliage, to decide whether the resulting flower was a development of the chrysanthemum or some new form of rose (No. 10).

But there is another consideration which influences these matters. The production of new plants is regulated, not only by the skill of our growers, but also by the requirements of the public. Why should we not have, say, a dwarf-growing hollyhock with large flowers, or a giant lily-of-the-valley? Simply because the public has not yet asked

NO. 10. — THE CORGONA, A VARIETY OF CHRYSANTHEMUM WITH A ROSE CENTRE.



NO. 11.—THE HOLMESIA, OR DWARF DOUBLE HOLLYHOCK.

for them. Gardeners have looked upon the hollyhock as a plant for the back of the border, but it will not always continue to be so. They do not think of the effects which might be produced by a low-growing bush covered with the beautiful blossoms of our modern hollyhocks (No. 11).

So several floriculturists, including Mr. S. Holmes, are at work on the dwarf hollyhock, which, when perfected, will, perhaps, become famous as the Holmesia or the Barneta.

Another somewhat surprising novelty will be the spider-flower (No. 12)—a development of the *aquilægia*, or columbine, as it is, perhaps, more commonly known. It is not at all unlike the present forms of the flower, and it is surprising to notice what an unusual effect might be produced with only a small amount of cultivation.

Up to the present any attempt to produce a large variety of the lily-of-the-valley has resulted in a very great loss of fragrance, which is the chief cause of the popularity of this plant. Messrs. Veitch have a variety considerably larger than the usual, but the older form is the one usually asked for by their customers. Here, then, is a problem for floricultural experts—to produce a lily-of-the-valley retaining the fragrance and other good points of the original, but growing to a height, say, of two feet.

There can be no doubt that in the course of the next fifteen years this end will be compassed, and if so the new flower will probably pass by the name of the Calleta, after M. Callet.

Large numbers of new varieties of primulas have been discovered and brought to this country in recent years, and these are providing material for numerous experiments. Many new hybrids will undoubtedly be produced. The beautiful little *primula rosea*, for instance, will probably be crossed with some larger and stronger-growing variety, and other useful crosses will, before long, be adding their beauty to our up-to-date gardens.

Then there are other new flowers which will be seen, handled, and smelled by our children or by our children's children—the mulgas, the exquisitely-scented jesipas, the great shell-like eupepias, the fantastic pyresas, the corgonas, the daffobalias, and the alterarias and the carminarias. Who knows but that it may be from these forms, as yet only dimly foreshadowed to us in the hot-houses, that the ladies and lovers and poets of the future may draw their inspiration and each be, in Dante's phrase—

> . . . that fair flower, whom duly I invoke
> Both morn and eve . . .

NO. 12.—A CURIOUS EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLUMBINE.

When I Was King.

By BARRY PAIN.

Illustrated by Gilbert Holiday.

I WAS in a part of the country where it is a good deal safer to kill a child than to take a pheasant. There are more people to look after the pheasants. I have always felt as if a man who could get his bird without a gun and cook it without a kitchen had a kind of right to the bird. An empty stomach is an argument too. Well, I got my bird, and then Bates got me. He is a big man and can use his hands. But all the same I am ready for him, man to man, at any time. He had three to help him that time, and that was why I had to stand up and look penitent while old White-whiskers talked nonsense before he sent me to prison.

I can talk the common talk, and I can talk like a gentleman by birth and education, which is what I happen to be. To Bates I gave the common talk—and very common some of it was. Just for a whim, to amuse myself, I gave the magistrate the other kind, knowing very well the sort of thing it would make him say.

"It is deplorable," said old White-whiskers, "that an evidently well-educated man like yourself, possessed of some abilities, and in a position to get your living by honest work, should take to this crime of poaching. The fact that you used violence towards the keeper makes the case all the worse. Men like you are a curse to the country."

Well, I have tried honest work. I have been a classical tutor. I have been an actor. I have been a bookmaker's clerk. But I like to go my own way at my own time. And that does not conduce to regular employment. My great-grandmother, I was always told, was a gipsy woman, and it may be that I have thrown back to her. I cannot say. I do know that I must go my own way at my own time, and that my own way is mostly out in the open, and that I do not love bricks and mortar.

It is not often that I stay for long in one place, and I had stayed too long in that village. There was a reason, of course, and if you guess that the reason was a woman, you need not trouble to guess again. I had a room at Mrs. Crewe's cottage and paid my rent for it regularly. I had done very well with plovers' eggs earlier in the season, and had not spent all my money yet. It was a mistake to stop so long, because the keepers began to study me a little. They began to watch where I went and to ask themselves why. I had been marked by them long before I met Bates in the wood that night. They put me in prison, and it did not do me any good. It made me angry. I was a nice, well-conducted prisoner though, for the people who had to look after me had no responsibility in the matter. They did not make the laws, they were merely getting a living. I was principally angry with myself, because I had allowed another man to beat me. I made up my mind as soon as I got out of prison to take to the road again. I thought it would be better for my health if I could smell the air of a different county. It is a solemn fact that prison is not good for your health or strength. When I came out I was not the man that I had been.

And then I found out something which changed my mind. While I was in prison, Bates went after my girl and made love to her. That settled it. I had got to finish with Bates before I could go on.

I went to Mrs. Crewe's cottage by night. When a man who has been in prison walks about in a small village in the day-time, remarks are likely to be made. If remarks were made, I was likely to take notice of them, and I did not want to get into trouble again. I made up my mind that Bates should be my next trouble. So, as I say, I went to Mrs. Crewe by night, to do the fair thing by her. I told her that I must find a different room, if I had a room at all. For if old White-whiskers found that she was keeping the convicted poacher on, she would lose her cottage. "So, Mrs. Crewe," I said, "I have come to say good-bye to you and Elsie."

Elsie is Mrs. Crewe's little girl—a pretty kid of ten, but with bad health. It was not a good cottage for a sick child, and the food was not good enough for her, and the doctor was not good enough. He charged Mrs. Crewe nothing—I'll say that for him—but

"'SO, MRS. CREWE,' I SAID, 'I HAVE COME TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO YOU AND ELSIE.'"

it was as much as he was worth. Mrs. Crewe's other daughter, Lizzie, was eight years older and in service in London.

Mrs. Crewe heard all I had to say, but it made no effect upon her. She said that she had always paid her rent and conducted herself respectably, and that old White-whiskers dared not put her out, and that if he did put her out she would get somebody to write to the London newspapers about it. She had a great belief in the London newspapers. She said, moreover, that she took people as she found them, and that I had always treated her and Elsie well. That was true enough. If Elsie did not get that last pheasant, she had had others.

Mrs. Crewe wanted, too, the money she would get from me for the room, and said so. She would take no money that she had not earned. She was that kind. She worked pretty hard too—sold the vegetables out of her bit of garden—did charing whenever she could get it, and made a little out of her fowls. She said, too, that Elsie had not been so well, and had asked for me.

"Very well, Mrs. Crewe," I said. "But there is one thing I have to tell you. I have been in prison, as you know, and something is going to happen which will put me back there again, and this time I shall not come out alive."

She said that she knew what I meant. Bates had not done the fair thing—that was acknowledged in the village. Still, I could

do no good by getting violent again, and it was just as well that I should stop with her and let her talk me into a better frame of mind. I laughed. She was a good woman, but no amount of talk would have stopped me. And then I said I would sleep that night at her cottage.

I did, and nearly all night I heard that kid crying.

"What is the matter with Elsie?" I said.

Mrs. Crewe told me. Lizzie had got permission to have Elsie up to London in the following week to see the King go past. Now the doctor had forbidden it. He was right too. She seemed to me to be pretty bad, and in the evening she was light-headed. I asked Mrs. Crewe what she had done.

"Told her that as she can't go to London to see the King, I have written to Buckingham Palace to ask the King to come and see her. Anything to keep her quiet. Funny the way her mind is set on seeing the King."

"And why don't you write?" I asked. "If he knew, and if he could come, I believe he would."

"Aye," she said, "and so do I. But he might never see the letter, and kings have a deal to do, they tell me."

That day I tramped into Helmston to buy something that I wanted for Mr. Bates, and as I walked into Helmston I could not get the thoughts of that kid out of my mind. Then a funny sort of idea struck me. I had been an actor, as I have already said, and I am pretty good at make-up. I bought a few other things in Helmston besides the revolver.

When I got back I told Mrs. Crewe my idea, and at first she was opposed to it. She said that Elsie would be certain to recognize my face and voice, in spite of my disguise, and

"I SPENT ABOUT HALF AN HOUR ON THAT MAKE-UP."

that if she found out she had been deceived, she would never forgive her.

"No," I said. "She will not recognize me. You yourself will not recognize me. I may not look very much like the King, but I shall not look in the least like myself. However, you yourself shall see first. If you think it is all right, as soon as it is dusk you shall go and tell her that the King has come."

I went to my room and spent about half an hour on that make-up. I think the result was pretty good, seeing that I had not got all the materials that I wanted to work with. I called Mrs. Crewe up and she was astounded. She said now that it was perfectly safe, that nobody on earth could have recognized me.

"Very well," I said. "You must wait until ten minutes after the down-train is in. Elsie knows the trains and can hear them from where she is lying. You must tell her that the King does not wear his crown and his gorgeous robes when he is travelling, but only a black coat, just like the doctor."

When I was an actor I was never afflicted with nervousness. But as I heard Mrs. Crewe in the next room tell Elsie exactly what I had told her to say, I shivered with fear. Suppose, after all, the child should find me out!

Elsie slept in a small bed in her mother's room. As I entered she tried to raise herself a little, and said in her best voice—the one that she used in church on Sunday—"I am so sorry that I cannot get up to make a curtsey to you. And ought I to call you 'Your Majesty' or just 'King'?"

"The correct etiquette," I said, "is for children to call me 'King.' I am very glad to have been able to come down to see you, Elsie. It was only by the merest chance that I could get away."

I gave her my whitened hand with the flash rings on it. She put her lips to it. "That will be something to tell the other girls," she said.

His Majesty inquired who the other girls were. He was told that Elsie had not been seeing much of them lately, because she had been ill; but she would be well and strong again very soon now—her mother had told her so. The other girls were very nice girls. Sarah Miggs had made a daisy-chain and sent it to her, and it was twice as long as the bed.

All this time Mrs. Crewe had, by my direction, remained standing. She adopted a most respectful attitude, and curtsied whenever I looked at her. I now heard from her an ominous sniffling. If the silly woman began to blubber, there was a chance that the thing would be given away.

"Mrs. Crewe," I said, with dignity, "you have our permission to retire."

She backed out of the room, and presently we heard her very busy in the kitchen, making an almost unnecessary noise with pots and pans. But perhaps that was intended to cover other sounds.

Elsie now demanded information about the interior of Buckingham Palace. I invented splendours, and she listened with rapture; she said it sounded more like heaven than anything else. She put a plain question to me as to the value of the enormous diamond on my finger. She found that it had cost even more than she supposed, and she was interested in hearing the history of it. The diamond had once been the eye of an idol in India.

Presently she said, with distress: "Oh, dear me, King, I do wish you could stop. There is such a lot more I want to ask you. But you will only just have time to catch the nine-thirteen, and that's the last up-train to-night."

"It is of no consequence," I said. "I had arranged to return to-night by motor-car."

"Shall I see it?"

"No," I said, "because by that time you will be asleep. It would not be a good thing for you to keep awake much longer. And if I tell you to go to sleep, then of course you must do it, because I am the King."

"Of course," she echoed. "Because you are the King."

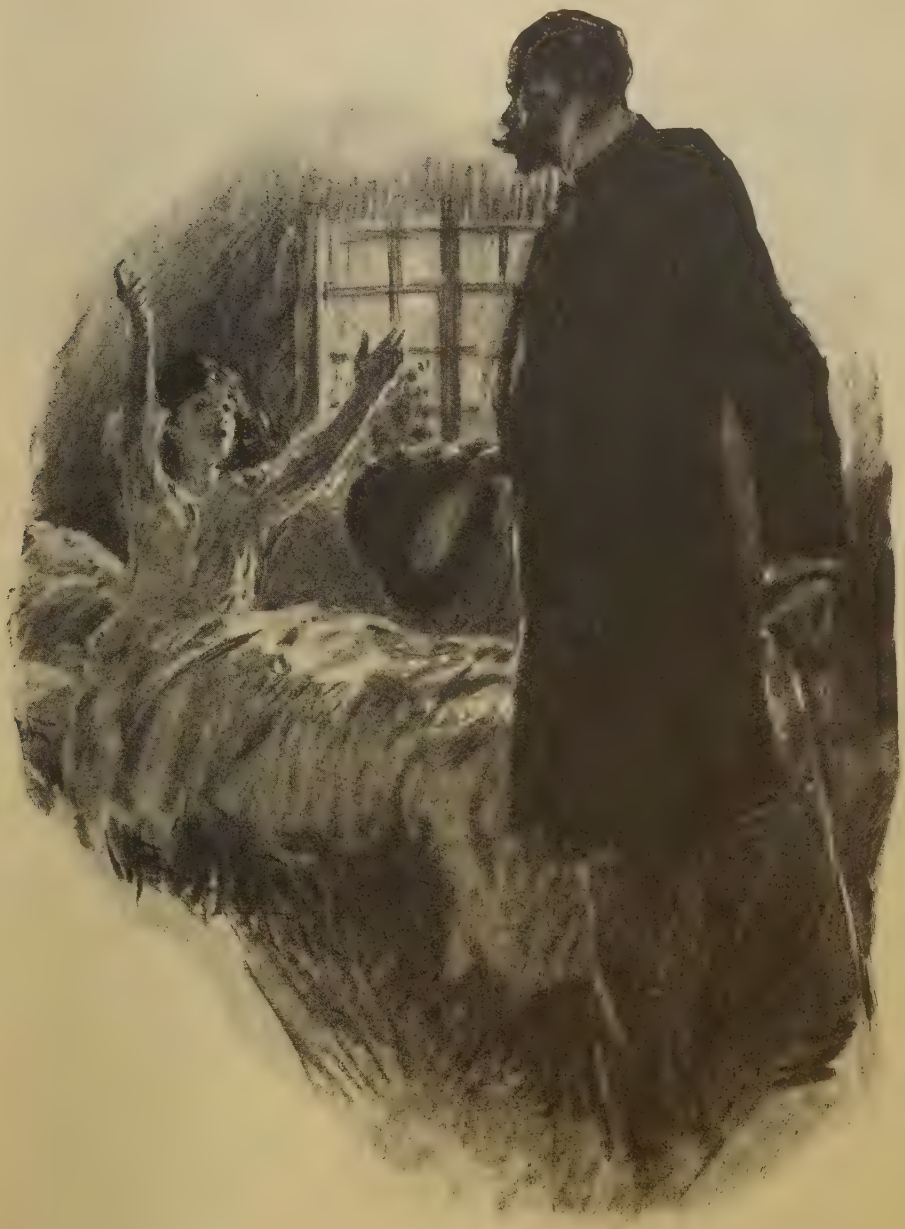
But I could tell her all about the motor. It was really more like a house than a car. It had three rooms in it, and all the walls and ceilings were covered with a pattern of lilies made in silver and gold. The stalks and the leaves were silver and the flowers were gold. One of the rooms in the car was like a bedroom, and in one of the other rooms there was a cupboard which was entirely filled with glass jars of sweets. Elsie named several kinds; they were all there.

She held my hand as she talked, and she was still holding it as she fell asleep. The room was almost dark now, though outside it was a light night. Then quite suddenly she sat up in bed and flung wide her arms.

"God save the King!" she cried.

In a moment she was asleep again, and I slipped from the room. I was a King no longer. She slept well that night.

Old White-whiskers had his points after all.



"'GOD SAVE THE KING!' SHE CRIED."

He took it into his head to have a look into his cottages himself, and in consequence a highly respectable firm lost a highly lucrative job. When Elsie and her mother get back from the seaside—White-whiskers is paying for them—they will find their cottage in decent repair.

And this morning I take the road again, never to return. Of course Mrs. Crewe thinks that it is her wise counsel which has kept me out of the hands of the hangman; but that is not so.

I have not seen Bates again, and I have planned not to see him again, lest at the sight of him I should forget a decision to which I came when that kid of Mrs. Crewe's sat up in bed and called upon God to save the King.

PRACTISING GRACEFUL POSES AT HOCKEY—INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPHS OF MISS DOROTHY EYRE.

Grace in Games.

By EMILY F. PARTINGTON.

[Is it necessary for a young woman to lose her feminine grace through indulgence in athletics? That is the question Miss Partington sets out to answer in this article.]

"WILL you please not let my daughter indulge in athletic exercises," wrote a mother to the head-mistress of Cheltenham College, "as I consider such indulgence destroys all womanly grace."

Now, it is nothing to the purpose that in this particular instance (which is probably one of a thousand) the young lady whose refined physical qualities were to be protected from golf, tennis, hockey, and fives, held these qualities so entirely in reserve that they were not manifest to the naked eye; the belief underlying the appeal is not only a common one, but it is one rapidly spreading amongst the mothers of the kingdom. Is there any foundation for it, and, if so, how much? Was the late Emil Reich justified in his suggestion that athletics tended to destroy the "muliebrity" of the sex? I, for one, after many years of experience of various branches of feminine sport, am prepared to confess that the charge is not wholly without foundation. The danger does exist. But there is an important qualification: it is not the games which tend to make women ungraceful; it is not even constant indulgence in physical sports; it is wholly the manner in which they are played.

When, about a quarter of a century ago, women first began in earnest to enter the domain of athletics, which had hitherto been occupied almost exclusively by men, it was argued by the advocates of the movement that it would strengthen the physique, improve the health, and increase the stature of the sex. And the prophets were right; these results have been brought about. Englishwomen are unquestionably superior in strength, stature, and endurance, not only to their English grandmothers of the Victorian age, but to their French, German, and American sisters. But, unhappily, the methods they adopted at the outset of their emancipation were the methods in vogue amongst men, from which the consideration of grace, so essentially important to the female sex, was conspicuously absent. The result is that they have gone on steadily improving their skill upon purely masculine lines, with the result that so many of them have developed purely masculine attributes, and thereby sacrificed to that extent their feminine charm.

Now, I maintain that this is all wrong. A woman need no more sacrifice her grace in outdoor games than a thoroughbred racehorse need simulate the gait of a camel in order to cross the desert. Take an illustration from those two great living exponents of the art of dancing, Mme. Pavlova and Mme. Genée. If you have seen either of this

pair you have seen a splendidly-equipped female athlete. Here is what Mme. Pavlova has said to me :—

"Many people have asked if I do not injure my health by the constant strain of dancing, and if my movements are not in danger of becoming hard and mechanical through constant repetition. I answer that it is just the reverse. The more I dance, not only the stronger, but the more graceful, I become. The reason is that all my movements are on certain æsthetic lines which experience has shown are not only beautiful, but are the best exercise for my body as a whole. If a movement is ugly it not only jars upon the eye, but it jars upon the body as well. If, for instance, I were to expend all my force upon ungainly, violent postures, I should be worn out in a week."

GRACEFUL SERVING.
From a Photo. by M. Dixon & Co.

There is the philosophy of grace in athletics in a couple of sentences. Certain attitudes and movements do violence to the nicely-balanced mechanism of the body. If they are constantly persisted in they bring about an abnormal state by throwing the mechanism out of gear, by putting a strain upon sinews, ligaments, and tissues which are not formed to suffer such a strain, and by developing and hardening these at the expense of grace and symmetry.

From this it should follow that the best exponents of any particular game or exercise are also the most graceful, and this conclusion is, indeed, borne out in numerous familiar instances. Take the game of tennis, for example. Here the equipment most required is quickness of eye, agility of limb, and strength and dexterity of arm. Now, if a woman symmetrically formed and delicately adjusted by nature were to follow the movements easiest and most natural to her, and play a mild and gentle form of tennis, she would probably not commit a single ungraceful motion or posture. But tennis is not a mere exercise or pastime; it is an exciting competitive game, presenting sudden contingencies and demanding rapid and even violent action. The brain has no time to formulate any special attitude of the body, and the body untrained or ill-trained, or confirmed in ungracefulness, sprawls towards the ball, most often ineffectually. The art of tennis-playing is to play the game; and who can doubt that a woman who learns to play gracefully, and therefore easily, by taking the line of least resistance in her movements, will not only be the better player to look at, but will ultimately be the better player to score?

In illustration of this I may point to the case of Mme. Esperanza, one of the leading players of the Continent. As everyone knows, it is one thing to pose before the camera and indulge in isolated presentments of grace; it is quite another to be snap-shotted in the very fervour and *élan* of the game. I have in my possession some twenty photographs of Mme. Esperanza taken in action, and every single one of them bears testimony to her own view that no woman need commit a single ungraceful attitude or gesture at tennis. If she does so, it is a proof that her body has not been properly attuned to harmonious movement, which should be of the essence of the game.

Another graceful exponent is Mme. Decugis, of whom an illustration appears, whose service especially is famous for its calisthenic charm.

It is said of a former lady-champion at tennis, who was notoriously rather ungainly, that she "took it out of herself terribly," and, indeed, her methods caused her to retire years before several of her contemporaries who were physically far less robust.

Recently, when a certain young operatic star, in order to meet the exigencies of her manager, was instructed to waltz up a staircase, she sent all her comrades into fits

of laughter by her awkward attempts. In a few weeks she could waltz up a staircase as gracefully as on a horizontal floor. For in dancing, even in the most intricate evolutions, a woman is obliged to be graceful—in tennis, golf, and hockey grace is supposed not to count. As if dancing were not a competitive game!

Croquet, in spite of the changes of style which have overtaken this pastime, is still

THESE FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF MME. ESPERANZA PLAYING TENNIS SHOW WELL HOW THE MOST ENERGETIC MOVEMENTS MAY YET BE FULL OF GRACE.

From Photographs by Givenchy, Paris.

one of the most graceful of all games for women. Archery, perhaps, is first. Yet I have seen croquet played in a hunch-backed, awkward manner, all the opportunities for pleasing the eye of the spectator—even in a largely-attended match—being thrown away. Or there is fencing, where eye and hand have to be as alert as in tennis, and yet where

MME. DECUGIS IS FAMOUS FOR HER GRACEFUL SERVICE.
From a Photo. by Reutlinger.

no ungraceful motion or posture would be tolerated for a moment by any tutor.

Indeed, I would have all games—games that are meant to impart health and grace—played upon the same principle that fencing is played—the principle underlying all rapid, free, easy motion. If you see two well-trained lady fencers, you see a delicate, harmonious, sweeping play of all the parts which make up that wonderful mechanism the human body. It does not argue that because a thrust looks light it is less forceful; and the hardest "sloggers" in all sports are not necessarily the most efficient.

No, the fact is that calisthenics are not sufficiently taught as an element in any game of skill, simply because the causes of bodily skill are so little understood. All games—and especially games for women—should be understood to demand grace, both for its intrinsic worth and as a means to attain proficiency. In other words, all feminine sports should partake of the nature of calisthenics—gracefulness combined with strength.

Perhaps of all modern games hockey is the

greatest sinner as regards what has been called "clumsifying" of school-girls. The reason for this is that hockey is, as a rule, a pastime indulged in by young women at a "flapper" or immature period, before the machinery of the body has reached its perfect state of adjustment. Consequently, rough, jerky movements, which are at first accidental, grow almost habitual, and end by altering the poise of the mechanism and the relative power and functions of its several parts.

"CROQUET IS ONE OF THE MOST GRACEFUL OF ALL GAMES FOR WOMEN."
From a Photograph.

Yet hockey might easily be played as a most graceful sport and yet not lose any of its interest or excitement. The only thing is to make grace an element of the game, and to begin by training girls in the proper handling of the club and the proper movements of the body, and penalizing awkwardness and ungainliness just as, although in a different way, an awkward dancer is penalized. I know several schools where hockey is played in a graceful manner, and where, even in a stirring scrimmage, the lessons taught by calisthenics are not disregarded, because they have grown quite natural.

It is a just grievance with many girls who have left school that they are then only compelled to begin to be graceful, and that the bad habits of the hockey-field have to be disciplined in the ball-room. Many a young woman takes to punting and croquet just in time to save herself from slipshoddity and hobbledehoyhood. A course of archery will also work wonders; but there is really no reason why the process should not have been begun in the beginning, and if the head-mistresses would only see that all games are

"ALL GAMES FOR WOMEN SHOULD BE PLAYED ON THE SAME PRINCIPLE THAT FENCING IS PLAYED."
From a Photo. by M. Dixon & Co.

MISS LEITCH DRIVING, SHOWING THE SYMMETRY OF HER SWING.
From a [*Photograph.*

played with the same eye for grace that was exercised by the Greeks in their female sports, or is to-day exercised on the stage and in the ball-room, we should no longer have any mothers reluctant to allow their daughters to participate in games, or any complaints as to the want of muliebrity in the twentieth-century woman. For, as Mme. Pavlova has said, the more and the more earnestly she played golf, hockey, tennis, and even cricket, the more graceful and perfectly developed she would become. It is when she uses the wrong muscles and bends her body at the wrong angles that the harm comes. It is precisely the same with the functions of the human voice. No matter how excellent the organ is, if you sing in the wrong manner the voice loses its quality, and the more you use it the more it deteriorates. On the contrary, if it is used in the right manner, hard work only improves and enriches it. Mme. Patti herself has said that she sang better at fifty than at twenty.

A well-known lady golf-player once assured me that in her belief grace was largely a matter of fashion, and that "style," especially in golf, was wholly regulated by prejudice.

"When I started golf I found, somewhat to my surprise, that it was not at all necessary to 'toe in' when making a drive, and that I could describe a fine circular sweep with my club that was not only picturesque, as my non-golfing friends told me, but was also dynamically effective. Imagine my chagrin when I was told that this symmetry of pose and action was all wrong—that So-and-so and So-and-so (naming certain illustrious players) never did it, that it was amateurish and 'unbusiness-like,' and, in short, without any other reason than a foolish desire to appear an old hand at the game, I was led to alter my style. And now I can't get out of my present style, which numerous photographs tell me is very ugly, although I am convinced that my former 'Grecian drive,' as someone called it, was really better for my game."

A famous young English player, Miss Leitch, is another of those who do not believe that a girl need sacrifice anything to clumsiness. The drive is, after all, the crux, because of the very violence of the swing. As for the movements on the putting-green, they can be almost as graceful as those of the croquet-lawn.

AT GOLF A GIRL CAN BE AS GRACEFUL AS AT CROQUET.
From a Photograph.

The Tessacott Tragedy.

By CHARLES GARVICE,

Author of "Just a Girl," "The Girl Without a Heart," etc.

Illustrated by W. R. S. Stott.

CYNTHIA stood beside the patch of firs on the steep hill and, shading her eyes, looked at the sunset which was turning the sky and sea to copper. The whole place was a blaze of colour; for around her glistened the gold of the gorse, and halfway down the hill below her were the red roofs and white and yellow-ochre walls of the little village of Tessacott. In early summer North Devon is as brilliant and as varied in colouring as Italy.

She was not Devonshire bred, for her father—a London ex-clerk, whose employers had pensioned him off—had brought her, when she was ten years old, to the remote little village on the edge of the moor and sea. Unlike the Tessacott girls, she was dark, and her complexion was not that of the local roses and cream, but of an almost opaque white, which accentuated the darkness of her brows and hair and the clear grey of her eyes. She was of middle height, but so slim that she appeared to be tall; and she had the grace which is one of Heaven's most precious gifts to some women of her age.

To old Dale Tessacott was an earthly Paradise, a haven of rest after forty years of toil. It could not be said that Cynthia was unhappy; but Youth is restless—it is its nature to be assailed by vague longings, still vaguer aspirations. There was a gravity, a dreaminess, in the grey eyes, a touch, not of petulance, but of wistfulness, in the droop of the somewhat thin lips, as, with an unconscious sigh, she slowly turned and, going lightly down the steep hill-path, made her way to the village.

She stopped at the forge, which stood a little apart from the other houses in the straggling street; and she stood by the half door in silence for a moment or two, looking at Jasper Brand as he beat a glowing horseshoe into shape. Suddenly, as if conscious of her presence and the eyes that rested on him, he turned his head; and he stood also in silence, looking at her.

Jasper was a young man of phenomenal strength, and superbly built; but for its ruggedness, and a somewhat stern expression, his face would have been good-looking. Yet its plainness was redeemed by remarkably fine eyes of singular intelligence and steadfastness. He was something more than the ordinary village blacksmith; for he had a bent towards engineering, and the farmers for miles round brought their machines to him in lieu of sending them to the big towns of Barnstaple or Bideford. Jasper was given to reading, and in his sitting-room in the cottage beside the forge there were some hanging shelves which contained standard literature, on which Jasper fed nightly.

As he laid the big hammer on the anvil and came to the door the red in his face grew a shade deeper; but he was still silent.

"Good evening, Mr. Brand," said Cynthia, easily, but not condescendingly; for she was intelligent enough to recognize the young blacksmith's superiority to the rest of the villagers. "Father has broken the well chain. Will you be so kind as to send Tom to see to it?"

"I will come myself, Miss Cynthia. I will come now."

He began to turn down his sleeves, but Cynthia exclaimed:—

"Oh, please don't interrupt your work; after you have finished this evening will do. Any time."

"I'll come in—half an hour," he said, thinking: Probably she is only going down to the shop to buy something; she'll be back in half an hour.

Cynthia went down the street, and Jasper returned to his work and picked up the hammer; but he let it rest on the anvil, and stared thoughtfully at the cooling shoes; then he sighed, caught up the shoe, thrust it into the fire, and Tom began to blow.

Presently he went to the pump in the

kitchen. When he had dried himself, he got into his workaday jacket. Then he went slowly up the hill with his tool-basket in his hand.

Mr. Dale, in the fawn alpaca coat beloved by every true Cockney, was working in the square of garden which sloped from the front

as if he were disappointed. She had not got back yet. But while he was examining the chain he heard a light step coming up the path, and Cynthia's voice saying :—

"Oh, here you are, Mr. Brand. I suppose it can be mended ; or shall we have to have a new one ?"

"CYNTHIA SEATED HERSELF ON THE EDGE OF THE WELL AND ABSENTLY WATCHED JASPER."

of the cottage. He straightened his back and looked at Brand absently.

"Ah, you've come to see about the well chain, Brand."

As Dale led the way to the garden behind the house, Jasper looked round as if in search of something, and his brows drew together

As she spoke she came up to the men and looked at the chain with them. She was so near to Brand that the sleeve of her dainty dress touched his arm ; his lips drew straight and the colour mounted slowly to his face.

"Oh, yes, it can be mended," he said, in his grave, serious way.

Mr. Dale lingered for a moment; then, murmuring importantly, "I'm planting out," hurried back to his garden. Cynthia seated herself on the edge of the well and absently watched Jasper as he got out a pair of huge pincers and a small hammer and began to manipulate the chain.

"How nicely you are doing that," she said, presently. "You must be very strong to bend that link so easily."

"It's not strength, but use," he said. At that moment he felt as weak as water; for tremors were running through him, hot-cold thrills which seemed to rob him of the strength which God had given him.

"Oh, but that isn't it altogether," she said. "You are very clever at your work; everybody says so. You are quite an engineer."

His face reddened with pleasure; but he shook his head.

"No," he said. "I'm just a blacksmith, with a turn for machinery. An engineer's very different."

"I don't believe you," said Cynthia, with a little laugh. "Is it finished? Thank you very much." She looked at her watch. "Why, it's tea-time! I must go and see about it."

Jasper watched her as she strolled up to the house; then he fixed the chain, picked up his basket, and went into the front garden. He paused to look at the old man, who was setting geraniums and calceolarias, and Mr. Dale, with an approving nod at the plants, said:—

"Nice lot, aren't they, Brand? I was luckier with them this year than last. Oh, by the way, I hear you've bought those cottages out at Marsland. Why, dear me! you're getting to be quite a man of property; you'll be a rich man presently. And that just bears out what I always say," he went on, sententiously; "that a man who sticks to his work, and knows how to keep his money when he's earned it, can do well anywhere—even in Tessacott. You'll be looking out for a wife presently, Brand," he chuckled, as he tapped the bottom of the flower-pot and released the plant. "In fact, I was remarking to Cynthia yesterday that I wondered you hadn't settled down before this. I'm sure there are plenty of pretty girls in Tessacott who'd be glad to take you."

Jasper made no response, but stood, his eyes cast down, his rugged face impassive. Cynthia came to the open door and called out:—

"Tea is ready, father."

"Oh, bring me a cup out here, my dear, will you?" said her father. "And you might bring a cup for Mr. Brand, too."

Jasper flushed and, with a muttered refusal, was hurrying away; but Cynthia, with a nod and a pleasant "Why, of course," disappeared. She came out again presently with a little tray; and Jasper had a burning desire to go to her and take it from her hand, but he felt rooted to the spot.

"Come and sit down, both of you," said Cynthia.

Her father plumped down on the bench beside her, Jasper sank slowly and shyly on a rustic chair. As he took the cup and saucer from her his great hand trembled a little; but Cynthia did not notice it, did not notice the doglike devotion which poured from his eyes when they were raised to hers. By way of conversation, her father mentioned Jasper's latest purchase; and Cynthia, with a little air of surprise, congratulated him.

"You will soon be too rich to stay at Tessacott," she said. "You will be going to London or one of the large towns to make your fortune."

"I shall never leave Tessacott," said Jasper, almost gruffly.

"Now I like that," observed Mr. Dale, looking round him with an air of complacency and satisfaction. "It's a very beautiful place, Tessacott; and I'm not surprised at your being fond of it. I'm fond of it myself. Look what it's done for Cynthia and me!"

Cynthia got up with a laugh.

"Well, I mustn't sit here any longer; I've got ever so many pairs of socks of yours to darn, father."

With a nod to both of them Cynthia went into the house, and Jasper watched her as before.

"Yes, it's done wonders for Cynthia," said Mr. Dale, musingly. "She's only had one attack since she's been here."

"What attack?" inquired Jasper, with barely suppressed anxiety. "I—I didn't know anything was the matter with Miss Cynthia."

"Oh, well, they're rather difficult to describe. I should say that they were a kind of trance. They are caused by a sudden shock or surprise. She becomes quite unconscious; she doesn't faint; but she seems to lose her senses for a time, to be unaware of what's going on about her; and after she recovers she loses her memory. I mean, she forgets the shock or whatever it was that brought on the attack. She hasn't had one of these trances for a long time; and I'm hoping that the doctors were right when

they said that she would be certain to outgrow them. Of course, she wants every care. And she'll get it, bless her!—while I'm alive." For a moment an expression of anxiety rested on his face; then he said, thoughtfully, "I hope to see her married and settled before my time's up. She'll make a good wife; for she's not delicate, though she looks so; and she's domesticated and fond of her home—— But, dear me, Brand, I'm tiring you with all this family talk!"

"No," said Jasper, curtly. "Mr. Dale"—his voice was almost hoarse—"you've just said that Miss Cynthia needs every care; that—that she wants a husband who'll look after her. I—I—— Mr. Dale, I want to marry her."

Mr. Dale's prominent eyes stared at the white face opposite him.

"You—you, Brand!" he stammered, with a surprise that made Jasper wince. "I—I—— Really, you've taken my breath away; I'm so astonished. I had not the least idea. And I'm sure Cynthia has not——"

"I know, I know," broke in Jasper, with labouring breath. "How should she have? I know what she'll think, what you're too kind to say. I'm beneath her, Mr. Dale. I'm only a blacksmith. But—but I love her. I love her with all my heart and soul; I love the very ground she treads on and the air she breathes. I can't help it; it's just—just happened so."

"Dear me, dear me!" gasped Mr. Dale. "I—I don't know what to say. I never was more astonished——"

"I didn't mean to tell you. I didn't mean to utter a word," said Jasper, doggedly. "I meant to go on loving her and trying to be content with the sight of her, and a word with her now and then. But just now, when you told me about that—that weakness of hers, and of her need of someone to watch over her and care for her when—when you've gone, it came over me that no one in this wide world could watch over her more tenderly than I would do, rough as I am; and—the words came out before I could stop them. Mr. Dale, you were bantering me with being a rich man. I'm not rich, of course—how could I be?—but I've saved some money, I've got some property, as you know——"

"Yes, yes," Dale interrupted him. "I know, I know. It isn't that. You're quite rich, Brand, compared with us. I've little to leave her; my pension dies with me."

He grew more thoughtful as he spoke. After all, was Jasper Brand any lower in the social scale than themselves? He was not like the ordinary blacksmith; he owned property, was looked up to by the village; was, next to Dale himself, the most important man in Tessacott. He was superior in every way to his station. And it was evident that he loved Cynthia. The young man's face was absolutely white, his tightly-set lips were quivering; there was something in his eyes which almost awed the commonplace ex-clerk. After all, it would be a good match, a safe future for Cynthia.

"Well?" forced itself from Jasper's lips.

"I don't say 'no,' Brand," said Dale. "But it's Cynthia; it's Cynthia who will have to decide. It must rest with her, of course."

"I—I'll speak to her," murmured Jasper, in the tone of a man volunteering for a forlorn hope.

"Why—yes; but not just at once," advised Dale, with paternal wisdom. "You see, she's seen so little of you. I mean as a friend. You must drop in to see us in a friendly way; in fact"—he smiled—"you must give yourself a chance, must—— Well, every girl likes to be courted, you know, Brand. And," he added, after a slight pause, "you have my best wishes."

Jasper took the hand offered him, and gripped it so fiercely that Mr. Dale wondered whether he would be able to do any more planting out that day.

From that afternoon Jasper became a constant visitor at the cottage; chess, for one thing, supplied the reason. Mr. Dale had been accustomed, in his old clerking days, to lighten the dinner-hour by playing in the smoking-room of the restaurant near his office; and it seemed that he had offered to teach the game to Jasper, who was always ready to learn anything. He proved a slow pupil; and, if Cynthia happened to be near, generally forgot when it was his turn to move. When the game was over Jasper was often asked to stay to supper; Cynthia used to do her needlework and listen to the two men talking books, flowers, and politics; and often she joined in.

She grew accustomed to Jasper's presence, and to Jasper himself. There were little things to be done in the cottage and the garden; and Jasper seemed always at hand to do them. Sometimes he lent her books or brought her a bunch of flowers. She accepted these attentions with that air of serene unconsciousness which the most unsophisticated of maidens can assume so easily; but she was pleased by them; there was some-

thing in his solidity, his strength, and the steadfastness of his dark eyes which caused her a feeling of security.

Once or twice Jasper had told her of some wild flowers which grew in more than usual profusion in certain spots in the woods, and she had gone with him to see them. It was not courtship in the ordinary sense of the word, for the man was too deeply in love to make love.

Then at last Jasper spoke—it was as he was saying "Good night" one evening, and Dale had slipped out of the way. She was almost as surprised as her father had been, but not quite. Poor Jasper could only say "I love you"; and he waited like a soul in purgatory while she looked down at the floor, her brows drawn together, her lips a little more wistful than usual. She did not love him; but she had learnt to know his worth. She had never been in love with any man; scarcely knew what passion meant. Somehow or other she knew that her father would be pleased if she said "Yes"; she would remain at Tessacott, near her father, she would always have this faithful, loving watchdog by her side.

And there was nobody else, would be no one else; for no one ever came to the solitary place on the edge of the great moor, ten miles from everywhere. She raised her eyes to his, saw the love-light burning in them, and gave a quick, little gasp which he thought meant "Yes."

Jasper went home that night like a drunken man; indeed, he was intoxicated, dazed with happiness. The engagement was made known next morning, and all the village was humming with excitement and satisfaction; for Tessacott was proud of Jasper and his conquest. Jasper wrote for a jeweller's catalogue, and the costly diamond ring which he chose was slipped by his big fingers on Cynthia's "engagement" one. She kissed him of her own accord for the first time; and she told herself that she was happy, and that she loved him—and she thought she did. There was no one else.

But *he* came three days later. She met him as she was going along the narrow path which led through the woods to Marsland, a young man in riding kit, which he wore as if it had grown on him. At her first glance at him as he came up the path, with a walk, a manner so distinctly different from those of the Tessacott folk, Cynthia was struck by the absolute beauty of his face. "Beauty" is the word, for the features were classical in their regularity; the hair and the moustache were nearly golden, and the latter mercifully concealed the lips, which were the one faulty feature of the face. The path was narrow, and Cynthia half-hesitated, then stepped aside to let him pass. But he did not pass; taking the cigarette from his lips and raising his cap, he said:—

"Can you tell me if I am going towards Tessacott?"

His voice was as pleasant to hear as his face was to look on.

"Yes," said Cynthia; "you go to the end of the wood, and then up the path to the right of the hill."

"Thank you very much," he said, with a kind of caressing gratitude. "Do you know Tessacott?"

"Yes; I live there," Cynthia replied, wondering who he was; for he did not look like one of the ordinary tourists who at long intervals passed through the village.

"Ah," he said. It was a very short word, but it seemed to convey congratulation to Tessacott. "Do you happen to know if there is a blacksmith there?"

"There is," said Cynthia, with a blush. "You will find the forge at the beginning of the village."

"Oh, thank you so very much," he said. He had noticed the blush, and thought that the touch of colour had made the beautiful face still more lovely. "I've had an accident. My horse has cast a shoe. I've tied him up to the stile below there. I will go back and fetch him. I have to be careful of him, for he isn't my property; he belongs to my brother, Sir William Esmount. You know him, I expect."

Sir William was the local baronet, and the Hall was on the other side of Marsland. The young man's suggestion that Cynthia must know the Esmounts was flattering. She blushed again as she replied in the negative.

"No?" he said, with a little air of surprise that was still more flattering. "I thought country people always knew each other. I'm staying on a visit there. What a delightful country this is!"

His tone and manner implied that he and Cynthia were old acquaintances, and Cynthia began to grow vaguely uneasy at his too great ease.

"You will be able to get your horse shod at the forge," she said, and moved on.

Mr. Esmount took out a fresh cigarette and lit it before following her; but, though he had yielded the path, Cynthia, still vaguely uncomfortable, left the track and disappeared amongst the trees. Presently she looked over her shoulder, and saw him leading the horse

along the path; he had thrown his arm across the horse's neck, and there was something in the action as caressing as the note in his voice, the expression of his eyes. He was so unlike any other man she had met that it was natural that Cynthia's thoughts should dwell on him. He was an Esmount: her first great man.

"SHE FOUND HIM HALF-ASLEEP ON THE BRINK OF THE STREAM."

She was by no means a vulgar-minded girl, and she did not begin to weave a romance about young Mr. Esmount; but she did not forget her meeting with him, and she spoke of him to her father and Jasper while they were at chess that evening, and made some smiling reference to his clothes.

"It is Mr. Raymond Esmount," said Jasper, looking up from the board, and seizing the opportunity to gather a fold of her dress in his big hands; for he was always hungering to touch her or something that belonged to her. "He used to be at the Hall when he was a boy, but he has been away in London or abroad for some time. Sir William and he don't get on very well together; Mr. Raymond's a bit flighty. I've heard stories—— My move? I beg your pardon."

Quite a number of persons besides the simple folk at Tessacott had heard stories of Mr. Raymond, and many of them were true. Seeing the harm it does, the misery it inflicts, one is inclined to endorse the hackneyed old adage, "Beauty is a fatal gift." Certainly Raymond Esmount's had worked a great deal of mischief. He was one of those men who regard women as creatures created for

one purpose only—to be made love to; just as your true sportsman considers that one animal, at any rate, was made to be hunted.

It was rather dull at the Hall, for the Esmounts were stodgy people, who did not go out of their way to amuse their guest; consequently Raymond fell to wandering about the woods and the outskirts of Tessacott, in the hope of meeting the extremely beautiful young girl at whose feet he was already prepared to lay the remains of his battered heart. And, of course, he met her.

On this second meeting, before she knew it, almost unconsciously, Cynthia found herself sitting on a bank beside him, and talking as if, indeed, they were old friends. He was an amusing as well as an ingratiating dog. He said not a word that would offend her; in fact, he paid her the very great compliment of talking to her as he would have talked to one of the girls belonging to the county families whom he met at the Hall. And before they had parted, without exercising much wile, he had learned from Cynthia that she generally walked in the woods or down by the stream every afternoon. She did not realize that he had interpreted the information as an appointment, and was therefore surprised when next day she found him half-asleep on the brink of the stream, with a fishing-rod—which he had not put up—lying beside him. There were other meetings, and after all of them she never failed to tell her father and Jasper that she had met—sometimes she said "seen"—Mr. Raymond.

No woman, especially one so unsophisticated as Cynthia, could even "see" young Raymond Esmount without being influenced by him. Presently she began to draw mental comparisons between that handsome and beautifully-dressed person and the man she was going to marry. Vaguely she wished that Jasper were not quite so rough and rugged, that his limbs, and especially his hands, were not so huge, and that they were more like those of—other persons. And presently, again, she wished that Jasper were not always so silent and so stern, and that he would talk and laugh like—like other persons.

Mr. Dale fell ill one day; a sudden attack of faintness. The doctor murmured something with "heart" in it, and the old man, mildly alarmed, hurried on the wedding.

At first Cynthia was startled; she grew pale, then blushed hotly. She pressed for time, and Jasper would have yielded, as he would have yielded anything to her; but her father was persistent. She made a journey to Barnstaple—one may appreciate the secluded life she had led by the fact that it was her longest journey since coming to Tessacott—to buy clothes. She told Raymond Esmount that she was going, and, by a strange coincidence, he was at Barnstaple himself that day—to get his hair cut. She had tea with him, and they travelled home together. Why not?

Jasper also had bought clothes; and on the eve of the wedding he presented himself at the cottage, attired in his wedding garments, for the approval of the bride. He looked every inch a man, and a splendid one at that; but, alas! as Cynthia's eyes rested on him she was thinking of another man, very differently clad. The three had supper together, and at parting with her Jasper drew Cynthia into the garden, gathered her in his great arms, and, with something like a sob, whispered, as he looked down at her:—

"Only a few hours, Cynthia."

Her face was white against the shiny black coat which smelt of wool and dye, and a little shiver ran through her as she hid her face against him.

"I'm not worthy," she said—moaned, rather—and her words were almost inaudible. "I wish—I wish that you didn't love me quite so well!"

The wedding was fixed for ten o'clock; and a little after eight Jasper, who had been dressed since six, saw Mr. Dale coming down the road. The old man was walking unsteadily, with drooped head and hands that worked curiously. Jasper went out to meet him; Dale staggered in and, leaning in a huddled heap against the wall and staring piteously at Jasper, gasped out:—

"She's gone!"

The elopement had been planned and carried out on the most orthodox lines. Cynthia had gone last night from Jasper's arms to those of Mr. Raymond Esmount, who, while Jasper was saying his last good night, was waiting with a dogcart in the road at the bottom of the hill. There was the usual letter, saying that she had gone off with the man she loved; that they were to be married directly they got to London, and begging, in the stereotyped language, for her father's and Jasper's forgiveness.

It was a bad day for Tessacott; old Dale was broken up by his daughter's faithlessness and desertion, and reproached her bitterly to Jasper. But Jasper not only uttered no reproaches, but urged excuses for her.

It never occurred to them to follow her,

to doubt that Esmount would marry her. It seemed to Jasper that a king on his throne would be only too glad and proud to marry such a one as Cynthia.

Even in Tessacott the greatest wonder, the most startling event, lives itself out very quickly; and Jasper's way of bearing his trouble helped to restore the balance of the popular mind. Not only his mode of life, but his manner, his speech, and expression, underwent no apparent change; and Tessacott comforted itself with the reflection that Jasper was not very much in love with Miss Cynthia after all, and was so convinced that he would soon forget her that some of the girls took up their courage and set their caps at him, as of old. Jasper bore this also with the same stoicism. He was waiting for a letter from Cynthia, and he went up every evening to the post-office to see if it had come. It did not arrive; and after a while old Dale turned his face to the wall and died. Jasper was chief mourner, and did not shed a tear. Strong men are given to weeping inwardly.

About a month after the funeral Jasper was sitting beside his fire, with his pipe in his mouth and a book in his hand; but he had not been reading. He often sat thus, looking into the fire and, of course, thinking of Cynthia. It was a wild night, and the wind was sweeping over the moor and swirling down upon Tessacott as if it meant to pick it up and hurl it into the sea. The door and the windows of the forge cottage rattled and strained; but though the noise was great Jasper's quick ears presently heard another sound—a feeble knocking at the door. He put down his book, rose, and stood for a moment as if holding his breath; then he opened the door. Cynthia stood there.

Without a word he led her, almost carried her—for she was pretty nearly worn out—into the warm room. Without a word he set her in a chair; and without appearing to look at her turned his back and made up the fire. But he had seen her; had noted every line of the white and wasted face, the black dress, the shabby jacket, the battered hat. He went to her, gently removed the hat, and unfastened the jacket. There were no spirits or wine in the house; but, in unbroken silence, he warmed some milk and put the cup into her hands. But, well-nigh exhausted as she was, she could not drink—yet. She raised her eyes and looked at him steadily.

"I have come back," she said; and, hollow and weary as the voice was, the old note in it set his heart beating. "I have been to the cottage—it is shut up. My father?"

A direct blow is sometimes the more merciful.

"He is dead," said Jasper.

It was not merciful in this case. Holding the arms of the chair, she rose, her eyes distended, her lips parted; she gazed straight before her. Jasper spoke to her; she did not hear him. He touched her; she did not feel him. She was like a thing of wood or stone; she was in a trance. He knew what he had done, and cursed himself. He took her in his arms and nestled, cherished her, stroking her face, chafing her hand. She came-to after a while—a terrible while it seemed to Jasper. With a sigh she put him from her and stood by the fire, looking down at him. He remembered what her father had told him—that loss of memory followed one of these attacks; but it had not done so on this occasion.

"I killed him," she said, tonelessly.

"No," said Jasper, with his direct honesty. "He was bad before—the doctor said he might have died any time. I was with him at—at the last."

"I deserted him," she said. "And you."

She laid her hand on her hat and jacket, but Jasper took them from her.

"Wait. Sit down."

"I know," she said, and sank into the chair. "You want me to tell you. It is soon told."

She did not speak bitterly or cynically. It would have sounded less horrible if she had done so.

"I am not——" She did not finish the sentence, but held up her left hand; there was no ring on it. "He left me soon after—three months and four days. I got some work. I was ashamed to write. But I fell ill, and my pride was broken down. I came home."

Jasper stood beside the fire, his face turned from her. His hands were thrust in his pockets; they longed, with a horrible longing, to be round the throat of Mr. Raymond Esmount. She drew a long sigh, put up her hands to her hair, and rose.

"I ought not to have come to you; but the cottage—all shut up and dark—frightened me. I came to you—scarcely knowing. I will go, Jasper. I won't say I'm sorry; it would insult you. Forgive me for coming."

"Where else should you come?" he said. "Did you think I should let you go?"

She looked at him with a weary, questioning gaze.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I mean that you must stay," he said, quite calmly, though his breast was heaving.

"Do you think your father would have turned you away? Do you think he loved you better than I do? Yes, it's the same with me, Cynthia, as it always was. I couldn't change if I wanted to. You're all the world to me, as you always were."

"I couldn't," she breathed. "I should always remember——"

"I'll teach you to forget"—with quiet confidence. "Yes, I know I can. It mayn't come soon, but it will come; and, till it does, I'll wait. You needn't be afraid; I won't

"HOLDING THE ARMS OF THE CHAIR, SHE ROSE, HER EYES DISTENDED, HER LIPS PARTED; SHE GAZED STRAIGHT BEFORE HER."

He stretched out his hand towards her, and she shrank back, almost with fear; there was something awful in such constancy.

"You mean—you mean—that what I've done—the past—makes no difference?" she whispered, amazedly.

"That's just what I mean," he said, in his grave, stern way. "I want you to marry me, as I wanted you eighteen months ago."

say a word, do a thing to persuade, to force you. You shall just be my wife——"

"No, no," she gasped, and with a quick movement she snatched up her hat and jacket; but with a movement still more swift he caught her in his arms.

"But I say 'Yes,'" he said, his face bent over hers, which was strained away from him. "I've a right to you. You've lost the right to

refuse me. That night you pledged yourself to me I swore to protect and cherish you. I'm going to. The past makes no difference to me——"

She shook her head wildly from side to side, her hands pressed against his breast, her eyes turned up to his.

"No, no. Listen—you shall listen! I will tell you the truth; you must hear it. You speak of its being past; it is. I loathe him. But—but the past may come again. As God is my witness, Jasper, I loathe him with all my heart; but—but——" Her voice rose almost to a shriek. "I tell you if I were to see him again, if he were to come in at the door at this moment, at any moment in the future, I—I should turn to him, hate and despise him as I do; if he were only to raise his hand and beckon to me, I should follow him. I couldn't help myself. It's "—she shuddered—"the hold he has on me—though I know what he is, and after all I've gone through—— Let me go! It will be better for you. For God's sake, let me go!"

"For God's sake and my own, I won't," said Jasper. "Let him come—at his peril. I can hold you!"

That settled it. She slept that night at the inn. The next day Jasper got a special licence, and they were married without delay. Tessacott took it with surprising philosophy—it agreed that it was only natural that Cynthia, finding herself a widow and in poor circumstances, should return to her first love—and Jasper's presence of mind and tact enabled her to slide into her place in the village quite easily. She grew stronger; the old brightness came back to her eyes; and, though she did not laugh much, she appeared cheerful and content. The less said about Jasper's contentment the better; perhaps, as in the old days, it was enough for him to have her near him, to be living in the same house with her. His devotion never faltered, his patience never tired. Their days were as uneventful as those of the rest of the villagers; and yet every day was marked by his tender care of her.

A maid had been engaged to do the housework; there was no need for Cynthia to soil the hands he loved to watch as she sat opposite him at table or beside the fire, mending his socks or sewing on his buttons. Sometimes he read aloud to her, and it is not improbable that he knew she was not always listening; he thought that her mind was running on the past contained in those eighteen months which were lost to him. He did not guess that she was thinking of the present and of him; for no woman, other than a fool, could have been insensible to Jasper's worth. Again she drew comparisons, but they were now all in Jasper's favour. She did not love him yet, otherwise she would, of course, have let him know it by a word, a look, or a touch of the hand; but an infinite respect for him, quickened by gratitude, was growing up in her heart. She was glad when he came in from the forge; his presence brought her serenity—love was not far off.

One evening Jasper came in to tell her that he had to go to one of the outlying parts to see to a machine. The tea was on the table, and he drank a cup standing up.

"Won't it wait?" she asked. "It's a bad night."

"They want to start ploughing to-morrow," he said. "I'll have to go; but I'll be home as soon as I can."

"I'll have a nice supper for you," she said; and she went to help him on with his coat; but Jasper shuffled into it before her hands had touched him.

"Those books I ordered have come down," he said, as he opened the door. "You won't feel lonely with them." It was the first time he had left her in the evening.

She shook her head in assent. When he had gone she did not open the parcel, but sat beside the fire, gazing at it with her brows drawn and the peculiar, wistful curve of her lips. Half an hour afterwards, while she was still sitting there, she heard the outer door open—it was never bolted—and, thinking it was Jasper come back for something he had forgotten, she sprang to her feet and began to clear away the tea-things. Someone knocked at the sitting-room door; she set down the cups, looked puzzled, and somewhat startled. Mary, the maid, had gone down to the village to spend the evening with her mother. Jasper had forgotten this, or he would not have left Cynthia alone in the house.

She moved towards the door; then she stopped, a vague presentiment, the chill of a sudden fear, falling on her. As she stood, uncertain what to do, the door opened and Raymond Esmount entered. He was much changed; he looked ill and harassed; but something of the old beauty was there, the old grace still remained to him. She did not speak; but she leant heavily against the table and clutched it with one hand.

"Cynthia!" he said; and at the sound of his voice a shudder shook her and she pressed her hand to her bosom. Her eyes were fixed on him as if she were fascinated, paralyzed.

"Cynthia," he said again; and the old, caressing note was in his voice. "I've come to find you, come in search of you, to take you back."

Her lips moved, but no sound came.

"CYNTHIA WAS STANDING IN THE CENTRE OF THE ROOM, WITH HER HANDS RESTING ON THE TABLE, HER EYES FIXED ON THE OPPOSITE WALL."

"I can't live without you, Cynthia. Oh, I've tried, right enough. I've been a brute and a cad—a scoundrel, if you like. You couldn't call me any worse names than I've called myself; and I deserve them all. But I love you, Cynthia, still."

She knew that he did not love her: that he was incapable of loving anyone but himself; but she saw that his vagrant fancy had turned back to her, and that, for the moment at any rate, he wanted her.

"Well?" he asked. "Aren't you going to speak to me? You will come, dearest? I've got a carriage waiting at the bottom of the road. It is all right; I saw him go——"

At this she found speech.

"No," she said, sharply, hoarsely. "I will not go. I won't leave him—my husband."

For she knew, at that moment, that she loved him.

Esmount drew a step nearer to her and held out his arms.

"Oh, but you will, Cynthia," he said—cooed. "You won't refuse to come back to the old happiness——"

"The old shame, the old misery," she murmured, brokenly.

"I'll teach you to forget that," he said, confidently. "I'll take you right away. Come, Cynthia!"

He drew still nearer; she felt herself yielding; her hand relaxed its grasp on the table, she swayed slightly—and towards him.

With a smile that grew to a laugh—a soft laugh of victory and satisfaction—he came close to her and put his arm round her. She yielded for a moment; her head fell on his shoulder; his arm tightened round her and he bent to kiss her; but before his lips could touch hers she uttered a cry and, swaying away from him, caught up a knife from the table—and struck.

Jasper was singing to himself as he opened the outer door; he stoppep to take off his overcoat and shake it; then he went into the sitting-room. Cynthia was standing in the centre of the room, with her hands resting on the table, her eyes fixed on the opposite wall. For a moment he saw her, and her only; then his eyes were lowered to the figure at her feet, the blood-stained knife lying beside it. The dead man had turned over in his death-agony

and was lying on his face; from beneath him trickled a thin stream of red. Jasper mechanically stepped over this, went to his wife, and took her hand; it was rigid and as cold as marble. She was in a trance; sightless, deaf, insentient.

He took her in his arms and carried her to her room—the room he had never entered since their marriage. He laid her on the bed and began to make some effort to restore her; but he ceased suddenly, stood for a moment as if in deep thought, then went downstairs. He knelt beside the dead man, turned him over, and, in the act, one of his own hands and his shirt-cuff were stained red. He reached for the knife, and wiped the blade on his coat-sleeve.

He was still kneeling, looking fixedly on the livid face beneath him, when Mary came into the room. She shrieked but once, for Jasper sprang at her and covered her face with his hand—the unstained one.

"Hush!" he said. "Don't disturb your mistress; she is upstairs, asleep. She was asleep when I went out. Don't wake her."

He released the girl, and, pressing her own hand to her mouth to stop her screaming, she fled from the house. A few minutes later the room was filled with a horror-stricken crowd.

"Yes, I did it," said Jasper, in answer to the stammering questions of the white-faced and trembling village constable. "You can take me away, Giles. Do it quietly." His eyes swept the huddled mob of terrified people. "Don't make a noise; don't wake her."

At the trial Jasper wanted to plead "Guilty," but he was overborne by the counsel who had been appointed to defend him. This counsel was a clever young man who was just arriving. He did not trouble about the evidence for the prosecution; he called only two witnesses, Tessacott people who knew all the details of Cynthia's flight with the murdered man. He allowed them to tell their story in their own way, and he then addressed himself to the jury in a speech so eloquent, so full of righteous indignation and of pathos, that, after withdrawing for a quarter of an hour only, the twelve good men and true, entirely disregarding the judge's summing-up, declared Jasper's act to be that of "Justifiable homicide." And the judge, as he pronounced the acquittal, joined, but inaudibly, in the long sigh of relief which rose from the crowded court.

The verdict met with universal approval. If it is not justifiable to kill a man in the circumstances in which Jasper was supposed to have killed Raymond Esmount, the man who came to rob him of his wife, then never can killing be excusable. There would have been a friendly and sympathetic demonstration outside the court, but Jasper was detained until the shades of evening and a true Devonshire rain had dispersed the crowd. He was accompanied home by one or two friends, who parted from him at his door.

News of his acquittal had been telegraphed, and Mary was crying with relief and joy as she met him in the passage. He knew that his wife had been ill—brain fever—during the whole period of his imprisonment. But, though she was still in bed, she was better, and, except for her weakness, would have been downstairs to receive him.

Her memory of the scene in the sitting-room with Raymond Esmount had completely gone. When she had been strong enough the parson's wife had told her that Jasper must have found Esmount in the house, and had killed him. The good woman, accustomed to carrying ill tidings, had broken the terrible story with tender care and consideration; and to her it seemed that Cynthia had taken the tragedy strangely. There was horror in her face, in her cry; but she seemed to accept the act as a natural one on Jasper's part. She said very little, but turned away, hiding her face from the sympathetic eyes. Strangely still, the tragedy did not bring about a relapse, and she continued to recover slowly but steadily. When Mary brought her the telegram she had uttered a low cry, but had said only, "Bring him to me, Mary, when he comes."

Jasper stood at the foot of the stairs, trembling as he had not trembled in the dock. He went up slowly and knocked softly, apologetically, at the door. A faint voice whispered, "Jasper!" and he went in. She had raised herself, and she leant forward, her hands pressed on the bed, her eyes fixed on his. They were both silent for a moment, then he said:—

"It's all right, Cynthia. . . . Are you better? You're looking——"

He stopped suddenly, for she had raised her arms and had stretched them out to him. There was a strange light in her eyes, her bosom was heaving, her lips were apart. Something in her face set him shaking; he would have knelt beside the bed, but she caught him and drew his head down to her bosom. There had been love in the eyes that sought his; there was love, not pity, in the pressure of the arms.

"Jasper!" she whispered, her lips touching his face. "Jasper!"

Had there been any doubt in his mind her voice would have dispelled it. He knew that she loved him at last, divined that his supposed deed had won the heart which had so long been cold to him. He was incapable of speech; he could scarcely see her for the dimness of his sight.

After a time he raised his head, looked full into her eyes, then drew her to him, his great arms enfolding her, assuring her not only of his love, but of his continuing protection.

When she was strong enough they left Tessacott and went to Canada. They prospered; children were born to them. Cynthia was not again visited by a trance, and memory never revealed the truth to her. As for Jasper, his one and abiding regret was that his own hand had not dealt the blow; but he consoled himself with the reflection that Cynthia and he were one, and that, he being absent, she had but struck for him.

"SHE CAUGHT HIM AND DREW HIS HEAD DOWN TO HER BOSOM."

SOME HOUSES I SHOULD LIKE TO LIVE IN.

By BECKLES WILLSON.

(With designs from Sketches by the Author.)

[Believing that the subject of the following article is of interest to every householder, the Editor of "The Strand Magazine" would like to hear what some of his readers consider a truly ideal house, both for originality and comfort, and would be glad to publish a selection of ideas in a future number.]

HE intelligent person who doubts whether the English are a race of sentimentalists should contrast their love of home with the homes they love. "All I know is," confesses W. W. Jacobs, "that the average houses are hideously ugly, both outside and in, and that, generally speaking, people like them."

It is not altogether chronic impassivity on the part of the average man and woman that makes them go on living in the average house; nor is it a sense of the merit of that particular house. Secretly, I dare say, they are dissatisfied; but the landlord has built it as they see it; the locality and the rent suit them, and so they make the best of a bad job. When they take a holiday afield, and happen to hear "Home, Sweet Home" on a barrel-organ or gramophone, the tears rush to their eyes, and they yearn wistfully for the semi-detached packing-case of half-baked bricks. It is all very pathetic—for it isn't at all the sort of house they really would choose for themselves.

I once overheard an acquaintance say of a certain new arrival at a neighbour's, "Poor Blank, to have a child like that! It's lop-sided, it's dark, it squints. Poor fellow!" And yet this compassionate critic went back to live in a house lop-sided, dark, and squinting—to spend his days and nights in it—to hug its hideousness and call it Home. It was a far worse affliction, for you could make something of Blank's baby—it might grow into something wise and amiable and witty—but you could never make anything of that man's house. The marvel is that people who will revolt against a tight, ill-fitting suit of clothes, who would be bitterly ashamed to let their friends see them in it, go on spending their lives in a tight, clumsy, ugly house—nay, even sharing a suit with utter strangers, handing the coat to one, the trousers to another, the waistcoat to a third.

"To-day, in England, we see," declares Sir Frederick Treves, "acre after acre of land covered with houses whose only external feature is ugliness, houses as free from any trace of design as a row of packing-cases, or so expressive of poverty of invention that the same sorry feature is repeated over and over again with the monotony of a sick man's babbling."

And the people like them because they have *got* to like them; they have been trained to think them inevitable, like Blank's unfortunate baby, and they make the best of a bad job, shutting their eyes bravely to obvious defects.

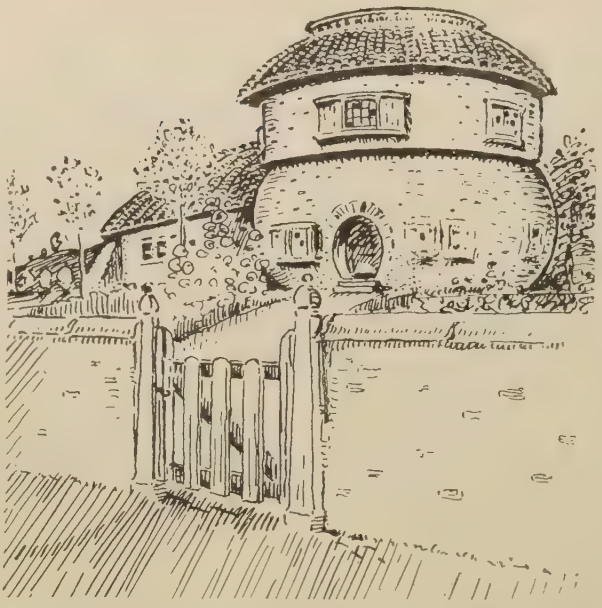
Oh, there will be a terrible revolution in town and suburbs some day! Wait until their eyes are opened. For within the past ten years there have arisen scores, hundreds, of architects who are ready to give them something handsomer and pleasanter, more convenient, and more lovable—for unless a house is lovable it might as well be an office or a railway-station—in exchange for their stuccoed walls, their yellow-brick packing-cases, their semi-detached villas.

I have a number of designs myself, which I have picked out at the request of the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, every one of which is delightful, distinctive, spacious, and full of modern conveniences. No one, perhaps, ever saw houses precisely after this pattern; but, as Turner said to someone who criticized his sunsets, "Wouldn't you like to see them?" And perhaps some day you *will* see them.

Charles Kingsley had a maxim that the external beauty of one's own house matters nothing, since you are in it and cannot see it, the really important thing being to have pleasant houses around which you *can* see. This maxim is altogether too altruistic for

me. It might equally apply to the physical excellences of our neighbours. No; we would all like to be beautiful ourselves, as well as to dwell amidst beauty.

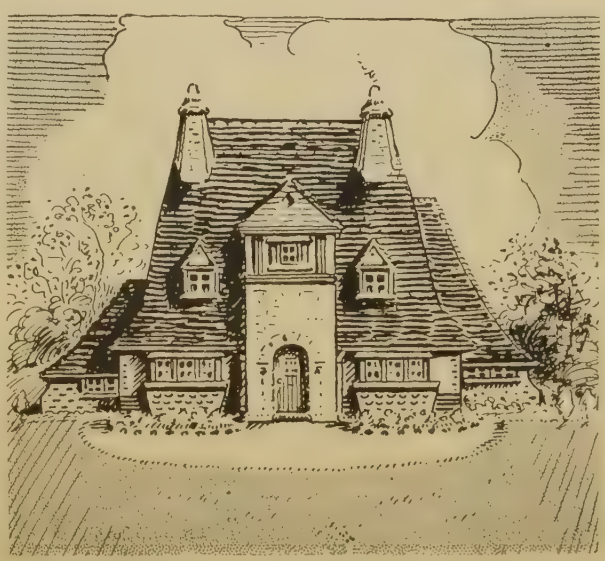
It is no easy matter to make a choice. According to Mr. E. V. Lucas, the only way to get a house wholly to one's liking is to build it, and then "a week after the last of the builder's men had gone you would see somewhere else the very thing you had been wanting all the while—the gables and chimneys, the tile and brick, the arrangement of doors and windows." That is the tragedy, not merely of architecture, but of life.



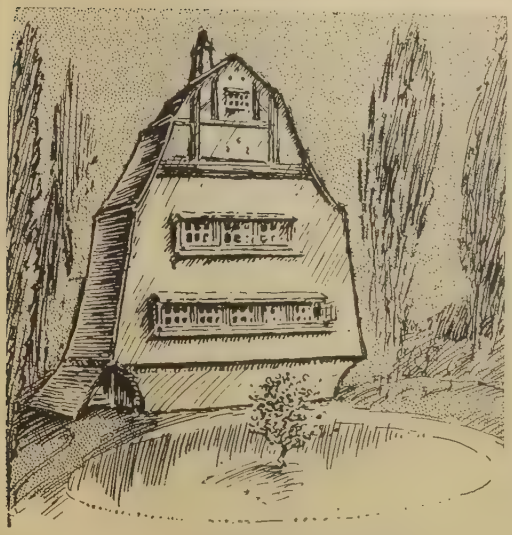
"MY FIRST HOUSE WAS BASED ON THE IDEA OF A CHINESE BOWL."

The first house to which I was personally attracted some years ago was an utter perversion of the conventional rectangular and oblique, and, I think, must have been based on the idea of a Chinese bowl, and was an aspiration towards the globular and convex. It had two storeys, the roof being slightly oval when seen from above, and crowned by an oval railed terrace, with a sliding floor looking down into the well of the house, which was lined with circular balconies. Thus light entered from the top, as well as through the circumferential side-windows. I believe now there is a great charm in a circular or a semicircular room. From the drawing-room one could look down through the shaft to the dining-room below. The ground floor was, I remember, particularly cosy, owing to the peculiar and amiable formation of its walls, which tempted one to lean against them—a temptation heightened by delightful seats like ship's lockers let into the window-bays. It was a charming house, but although the architect designed it carefully, and the cost was estimated, it never got itself built, probably because it was deemed too audacious an innovation.

My next house is based on one I had seen somewhere in Sussex, with a preternaturally high dormer roof. Dormer roofs have an irresistible fascination for me, especially when they are overlaid with tiles of a rich ripe colour, with just a suggestion of lichen to make them tone with the trees and lawn. Now, if in the midst of this sloping roof you posed a sort of colonnaded bay with a little tiled gable of its own, and pierced your dormer with a couple of small windows, and added two more high-pitched wings, what a delightful effect you would produce! I am speaking here of exteriors, but in this case, as in the others, the interiors could correspond perfectly. The great hall and living-room would greet you as you



"DORMER ROOFS HAVE AN IRRESISTIBLE FASCINATION FOR ME."



"A HOUSE WHICH WAS ALL ROOF."

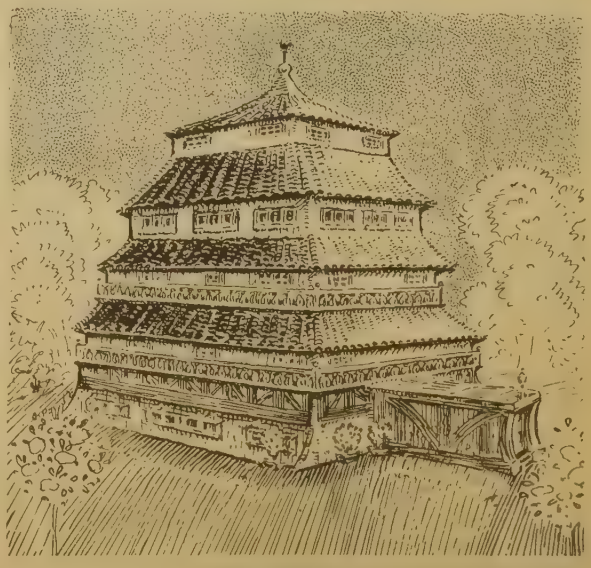
entered, at once homely and dignified, with polished floors, and bay windows fitted with deep cushioned seats. The kitchen and servants' quarters overhead would have a wing all to themselves, separated from the rest of the house by double doors, so that no culinary odours ever penetrated.

I once carried my passion for a dormer roof so far as imaginatively to construct one which was all roof—that is, from the chimney it reached down to the very turf, with pleasing hipped gradations like a very steep toboggan slide. The last and fourth section formed a sort of canopy for the house-dog, or in which fowls might take shelter. There were other peculiarities about this house. Its base was smaller than its middle, and imparted what I thought, and indeed still think, a very fine and choice effect on the whole. I would still like to live in it, although it never could be my only love.

I have dwelt much upon the idea of the high-pitched roof and the general sloping roof with a long course terminating on the ground itself, for I attach the utmost importance to roofs. The house where the roof is not visible, where there is no collection of lines, is no real house at all. Most London houses are not real houses in this sense—only over-covered walls. It used not to be so, but this kind of dwelling came in with the Georges on the wave of reaction, and not even Mansard had power to affect the convention. Anyhow, Mansard's roofs are generally covered with slates, and I turn from slates as I turn from all kinds of drabbery.

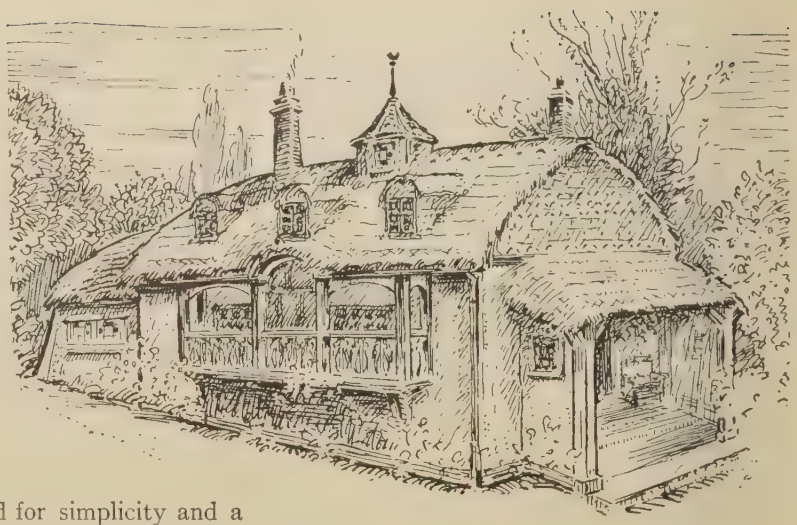
My next house exemplifies a very sound idea which ought to be valued more generally. It is based on the notion of a storeyed pyramid, three storeys, or four if you count the cupola, each smaller than the subjacent one. The projecting roof of each storey formed a veranda or promenade deck, which, when sheltered by an awning in wet weather, would give one a fine strip of floor-space in which to take exercise and think. The only unfavourable consideration about such a house is that externally it leaves very little to the imagination, and in this respect, for all its ingenuity and diminishing tier upon tier, it is really not much better than the packing-case design.

In a human dwelling, colour, I should premise, plays an insistent and essential part. You can almost lend the appearance of intricacy to a design by a judicious use of tones. That is why old houses, constructed at intervals throughout several centuries, with tiles and brick-work of different periods, are so attractive. In this case the effect was tried in different bricks—four sorts of old ones being used, and different tiles—and the glory of this house was the multiplicity of its timbered bay-windows and the sense of mystery in its interior. Once you knew it, it was all right and friendly, but, as the poet says, "you had to know it first." There was



"MY NEXT HOUSE IS BASED ON THE NOTION OF A STOREYED PYRAMID."

a beautiful commanding oak staircase, nearly opposite the front door, which was a great joy to me as long as I dwelt (in imagination) in that dear house. Alas! I could not be true. The day came—the evening rather (for it was sunset, filling the whole heavens with hills and turrets of gold)—when, near Calne, in Wiltshire, I sighed for simplicity and a thatch. This idea was based upon a splendid thatched barn. It was itself but a glorified barn, but how glorified! how ample! how generous! and yet how snug and cheerful were its interior spaces! Above ran a wide gallery, lined by the doorways of the six or eight sleeping-chambers. Below were two splendid apartments with four different levels, with little stairs, and lit on both sides in the most pleasing manner by the great bay-windows I love. I had to give up the thatch finally; but some day it is my fixed determination to live in a thatched house.



"THIS IDEA WAS BASED UPON A SPLENDID THATCHED BARN."

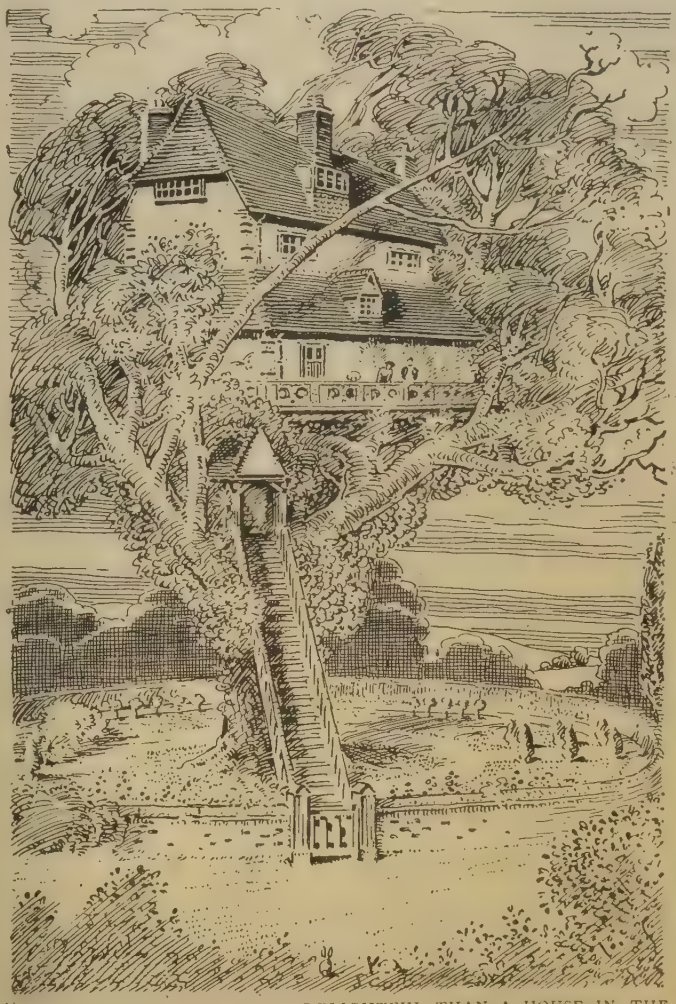
The circumstance that put me off this line, and upon one far more extravagant, was the sight of a certain old lodge in a Kentish wilderness, built in the turret style, which struck me as capable of adaptation to a house I was going to build. On reflection, I think the only thing that would reconcile me to a stone dwelling at all would be the twin turret idea, for a single stone tower is altogether too stark and solitary for comfort. I propose to build this dwelling of brick, of more than one tone, and crown it with a dark reddish tile canopy. The two towers would be connected by covered bridges. In one would be undertaken exclusively the business of cooking and eating, and in the other of discourse and dreaming. Under each roof would be a magical pleasaunce from which to view the passing show, to smoke one's pipe, and take one's ease.

"THE ONLY THING THAT WOULD RECONCILE ME TO A STONE DWELLING AT ALL WOULD BE THE TWIN TURRET IDEA."

I suppose everyone has been drawn since the days of the Swiss Family Robinson to a house in the tree-tops, and if this were practicable, as I have, on at least one occasion, seen it, nothing could be, at any rate in summer, more delightful. In fancy I have frequently taken up my abode in some

such luxuriant arborial cot; and when the autumn came and the leaves dropped one by one from the boughs, what more simple than to replace them by leaves that did not wither and, if they are affixed properly, do not fall? This constancy of leaf was exhibited on many trees at the Shepherd's Bush Exhibition during the past summer, and if we could not turn to art to rectify Nature's shortcomings what a dull world we should live in! Seriously, the house in the tree-tops is only for the summer, and hardly for these islands.

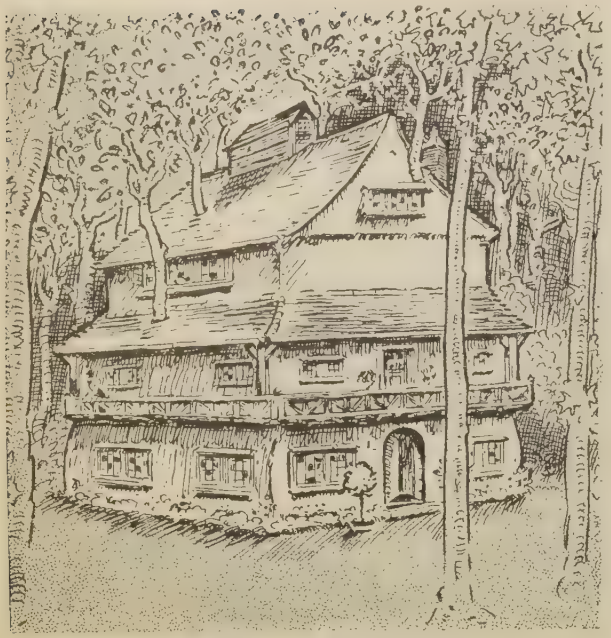
The next best thing is a house which takes the tree into partnership, and is built on the ground. William Morris tells of a friend who built his house in an orchard without felling a single tree. My house, then, would be a beautiful chalet built around one or two trees, and so become a living thing with its roots in Mother Earth, and a very part of Nature with its standing house of oak united and serene before the most tremendous efforts of the gale.



"NOTHING COULD BE MORE DELIGHTFUL THAN A HOUSE IN THE TREE-TOPS."

Before I reach the very culmination of my fancy in houses, I should like to say a word about interiors. Mr. Ernest Newton, A.R.A., thus describes the house of the future: "A house that is noiseless and dustless, whose windows of unobstructed glass open and shut at a touch, where no floors creak or doors rattle, the house that is weatherproof and always well ventilated, cool in summer and warm in winter, economical to build and keep in repair, and yet quite small and pleasing."

Every connoisseur in house-planning and house-living knows that there are too many rooms in a house—it is all cut up into rooms; and, on the other hand, there are too few closets and cupboards. The walls should be full of closets and cupboards. I know it would encourage the kind of people whose idea of tidiness is to throw things under the bed, and that untidiness is merely having things out of place, and the place for all things would be in cupboards. You could throw everything into cupboards if you were too lazy to hang them up, and when the cupboards got too full and the door would not shut you would set to work and have a general clearing-out. And spacious mural closets would do away with heavy wardrobes and chests of drawers and bureaux. All this kind of heavy furniture is superfluous. Houses should be provided with conveniences of this kind, instead of having them brought in, having previously been constructed promiscuously for a quite different people and a different sort of house. When you want to make a table, you simply let down one from the wall, or take away leaves and detachable legs and set up your table in the middle,



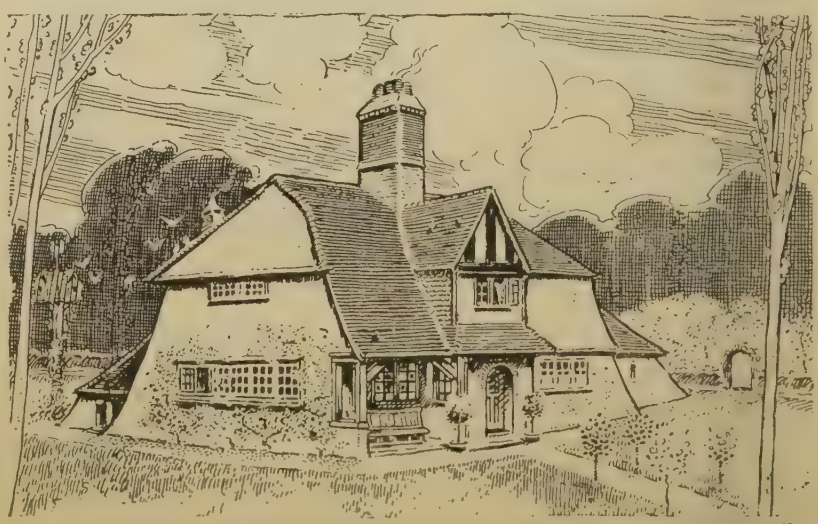
"THE NEXT BEST THING IS A HOUSE WHICH TAKES THE TREE INTO PARTNERSHIP."

returning it to the wall when you have finished with it. Think of what a lot of furniture we could abolish in this way! Could anything be more ridiculous than portable washstands and slop-basins? If every room had one of these fitted into it, as has every steamer-cabin, how simple a thing the hardest part of domestic service would thereby become!

My ideal house would have a double wall, ensuring an even temperature. There would be no corners in any of the rooms, all angles being rounded so as to facilitate the removal of dust. Fireplaces would be spacious and built of brick, so as to retain the heat. My hearth would not, I hasten to say, be constructed at the expense of the area of the room. Each fireplace should be a bay, as each window should be a bay. The staircase would be twice the width of the ordinary staircase, and, of course, sash-windows would be abolished.

Of course, all the foregoing are new houses. Where old houses are not to be had it is often possible to utilize old materials. No greater mistake there is, and yet one often committed, than to tear down a beautiful old house while the possibility of repair and adaptation remains.

I think, upon reflection, that the kind of house for which my love would be most lasting—that is, if it were a new house—would be the kind of house indeed which seemed to grow up out of the earth, mound-shaped, none of whose main lines were vertical. Such a house as this, gifted with gables, intelligent with bay windows, and crowned with an irregular roof, would lie beautifully upon the bosom of old Mother Earth. Then it would be all that I have described and more, for it might be all this in its fashioning and appurtenances, but it might still want character, it would still lack "atmosphere." That is where a house reflects the individuality of its inmate. Some houses, beautiful in themselves, also borrow distinction from their actual occupants. The final touches to any house must be in the nature of an inspiration, or be the result of the accretion of the years.



"THE KIND OF HOUSE FOR WHICH MY LOVE WOULD BE MOST LASTING."

MY MATINÉE TEA.

By WALTER DANNAGE.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy, R.I.

IT may have been an exhibition of insular prejudice; or it may have been the result of reactionary panic caused by the siege of Sidney Street, for it happened just after that. As a matter of fact, however, I had started the day badly. Johnny had left his duck in the tub overnight. The morning was dark; the duck was dead white. Naturally, I did not see the thing under the water, and sat on it. Not only did the pieces cut me, but I had to promise the child a new bird. Much as I approve of my son's love of animals, even of china ones, I cannot help thinking that it was extremely careless of the nurse to allow him to leave his toys about. I dare say this misadventure really had a good deal to do with the fact that the *matinée* bored me so much. It is not easy to respond to the inanities of a star comedian when one is suffering from recurrent twinges of pain. This was my first visit to the theatre after returning home, and I was annoyed to find that the play was an adaptation from a foreign work. I think that this gave a particular bias to my hitherto vague resentment against things in general.

It was quite dark, but not foggy, when we trooped out of the theatre, and the rain had stopped; but the streets were shimmering seas in which motor vehicles of every kind skidded and hooted. As it was the Christmas holidays, every place of entertainment was disgorging its crowd on to the already thronged pavement—in fact, I was almost as much struck by the numbers of idle people who could afford the leisure to go to the play in the afternoon as I was perturbed by the horde of foreigners in London. Round me raged Babel. Even the Jack Tars I saw—and there were many about, apparently on Christmas leave—had an un-English appearance, with their strange caps and their long hair. Not knowing where to get china toys, I stood awhile on the edge of the pavement and pondered.

As I stood, I felt paralyzed by the vast maelstrom of traffic in front, and my nerves were jarred by the orgy of noise. First a long, piratical motor, fitted with two blinding

searchlights and carrying a stuffed black cat on its prow, slid by. As it passed, one of the crew sounded an instrument which emitted the "Last Post" in chords. Beyond, a second car moaned with the deep tone of a liner in a fog; while the siren of a third, which was hurtling through the slush in the opposite direction, wailed like a lost spirit. I was then startled by a gurgling grunt, repeated several times diminuendo. This brutal noise—suggestive of elemental things, of death and of slaughter-houses—made my blood run cold. Why did the authorities allow the cries of dying animals to be reproduced in the streets of the capital?

But it was not only the ear that was affronted. My nostrils were assailed by the pervading stench of petrol and burnt lubricant, while my eyes ached from the riot of illumination which smote them from every side. The discreet blackness of night was vanquished by the flaming cressets, desecrated by the flickering sky-signs, offences against taste, and marvels of perverted ingenuity, which intermittently shone out and were occulted on high. A reeking juggernaut in the shape of a motor-omnibus clanked by, and, thinking that I saw a chance of crossing the street, I stepped gingerly off the pavement. I was at once driven back by a triplet of shrill yaps at my elbow, as a pea-green taxi-cab ski-ed past sideways, missing me by inches. The braked wheels threw slush over me, while the pale, foreign-looking driver shouted something about people sleeping in the street. Before I could frame a suitable reply the abomination had yapped its offensive way into the centre of the traffic, leaving me choking in a trail of blue smoke which clung to the slush. When I recovered from the shock I was in a thoroughly nasty state of body as well as of mind, and I spent a few moments in scraping slime from my face and clothes. No. I did not like London, or its cosmopolitan population.

Finally managing to struggle across, I walked on and soon passed the portico of a restaurant which catered for the thousand. In the windows, among placards of "Theatre Dinners," "Theatre Suppers," I saw the announcement of a new meal, "Matinée Teas." Feeling in need of rest and refreshment, I turned into the place. At the very entrance I was almost thrust back into the street by the strong smell of food, the crash of music, and the crush of people. But I persisted in forcing an entrance and found myself in a large and over-ornate hall. Every table was packed, and the programmes in the hands of many showed that they too had just come from the theatre. Harassed-looking aliens were rushing about with food, and above the clatter could be heard the wail of a string orchestra. As I wandered down the room looking for a seat, I was unfavourably impressed by the general deterio ation in manners. Quite a number of people seated at the tables looked up and stared at me rather offensively.

On one side of the hall were some uniformed musicians. They were all pale or swarthy, and looked tired; and all except the conductor, who was extremely bald, had long hair. Indeed, his polished head formed a striking contrast to those of his fellow-artistes. I could not help sympathizing with these really musical men, whom the struggle for existence compelled to live confined in a stuffy atmosphere of food, grinding out the same programme over and over again to unappreciative crowds. The conductor appeared the most bored. He was a heavily-built man with a fiercely upturned black moustache and pouchy eyes, and really interested me. As I was speculating whether he was an exiled potentate—a prince in disguise—or a political refugee, our glances met. Something in my appearance must have amused him, for the tired look left his eyes and he grinned and said something to two of the performers near him. The three stared hard and laughed whilst they continued to play—laughed offensively. I knew that their merriment was at my expense, and I experienced a revulsion of feeling. Not only did these dirty Anarchists and otherwise undesirable aliens swarm into the country and take the bread out of the mouths of honest, deserving Britons, but they insulted the people who showed them hospitality! I am, unluckily, a physically small man, and, strongly tempted as I was to an assault, felt that I might get the worst of an encounter with these savages. Being of a retiring nature, even victory in a knock-down and drag-out fight in a public restaurant did not appeal to me. Defeat was still less attractive. No, I could not afford to force my way to the orchestra and beat these scum of South-Eastern Europe over the head. I must devise some other less crude form of revenge.

I fancied, as I stalked away, that some of the waiters, that usually obsequious and tip-hunting race, smiled. There they were, in rows, in pallid battalions, clever, attentive, yet with a covert insult in their servile expressions. What a contrast they formed to the heedless crowd they were serving! How

many thousands of such subtle, industrious foreigners were there not in London alone—all waiting? What were they waiting for? I loathed their flat, pale faces, their smooth hair, their complacent air of efficiency. Yes; they were grinning — offensively! These fellows—musicians, waiters, all—wanted a lesson!

Search as I would, I could discover no vacant seat, and was about to give up the hunt, when a major-domo of flunkeys stepped forward and bowed.

"Vill you blease to go ubstairs? Zere is blenty of rhoom."

Leading me up a gorgeous flight of stairs, he ushered me on to a broad gallery which ran down one side of the hall, where a waiter showed me to a table next, and end on, to the balustrade of the gallery. I observed that both the waiter and the table bore the fatal number of thirteen! Of the six seats at the table, only four were occupied. On its farther side were a small boy and two ladies. On the near side the two chairs closest to the edge of the gallery were empty except for some umbrellas, a muff, and a man's hat. In the third seat sat a man.

Before any words passed I took a dislike to this party. No one made any offer to move the things so that I could sit down, and I stood quietly looking at the man. He scowled, and the two women glared at me—offensively. The boy brandished a fag-end of dough-nut, and said "G'way!"

"Excuse me," I remarked to the man, "do these things belong to you?"

"What'ch you think?" was the surly reply. As the speaker looked me down and then up I had a strong impulse to seize the property and hurl it down into the hall below.

"I should like them moved."

"D'you want to sit at this table?"

"Certainly."

"Yer don't want both chairs, I suppose?"

"If you take the things off this end one, it will do." I felt tempted to hit this person on the neck. But, as I have said, I do not like being mixed up personally in brawls. Besides, it was a thick bull-neck, and its owner could have given me three stone at least.

The gear was ungraciously moved off the end chair.

"Some people do shove in," said one of the ladies.

"Yes," replied the other; "they seem to want the 'ole 'all."

"Eughh!" grunted the man.

"G'way!" snuffled the youth.

In spite of this astonishingly encouraging reception I sat down, firmly drew off my gloves, and ordered tea and a buttered scone. Here, evidently, were more people who required a lesson!

I come of a stock which prides itself on paying its debts, on the staunchness of its friendships, and on the strength of its enmities. I had now at least two accounts to settle—one against the bulgy-eyed bandit from the Balkans and his fellow-conspirators down below, the other against the party of Yahoos at table number thirteen. If my machinations for revenge should succeed in including incidentally some of the cosmopolitan ministers to the pleasure and luxury of Modern Babylon, so much the better!

I first turned my attention to my immediate neighbours. The man on my side of the table was a thick fellow with what, I believe, is called the "torso of a gladiator," and looked all the bigger for his fur-lined overcoat with astrachan collar. He had a florid face and a heavy jowl, and his moustache was waxed and twisted so tight that his upper lip was pulled out of shape. In his tie was a large diamond; on the fingers of his left hand were two more; I could not see how many there were on his right hand. But, for all his jewellery, the man inspired no confidence. His personality suggested a combination of butcher and bookmaker, modified by a touch of the dealer in things that are neither new nor fresh. Possibly he handled "ole clo," rabbit-skins, or fried fish in bulk. I have never, to my knowledge, met a purveyor of tripe, but I felt that this person would have been a perfect seller of that comestible; his hands were made for it. Beyond scowling for a moment, he paid me no more attention and was soon deep in a paper of a class which stamps its reader. In the centre of the three opposite seats was the spouse of the tripe merchant, and obviously the mother of the boy. Almost middle-aged, massive, with dark hair and bright colouring, she was of the breed that is addicted to furs, satin, and precious stones. Beyond stating that she wore a hat of the variety described as a "Chase-me-Charlie," and had the skin of some furry animal wound round her neck, I am not capable of describing her dress. On her left was a lady friend. This person had similar rich tastes in apparel, and her fortune was certainly more in her dress than in her face, with its flaccid white cheeks and dark eyelashes.

On mamma's right, alongside the balustrade, was her hopeful, a promising youth of some

five summers. Hands, face, table, and plush cover on top of the balustrade proclaimed the fact that he had been feeding, and I was thankful for the three feet of smeared marble between us. Curly-haired and ruddy-cheeked, he was a fine child, only missing beauty through a certain over-lusciousness. He was clad in a black velvet doublet with silver buttons, a frilly linen collar, and a bow of Stuart tartan ribbon; from which presents I surmised that he might also be wearing a kilt. He kept his mouth open and breathed with audible difficulty. These symptoms were not unknown to me, and I mentally christened him the "Adenoid." I know the brand of child well, spoiled, overfed, at this moment almost gorged. Of course, as I studied him, the little lamb put his tongue out.

The two persons, evidently bosom friends, were still sipping tea and were deep in intimate conversation. "Yes, *deear*, what I feel about this place is that you do get yer money's worth, what with the mirrors, and marble, and the silk plush. I *do* like silk plush. D'you know, *deear*, that Doris got one of these new beaded plush mantles at Push and Feather's sale for next to nothing? She 'ad to fight for it; but what *do* you think she picked it up for?" etc., etc.

Both used the word "deear" with that iteration which deprives a word of all meaning, and with the nauseating intonation suggestive of undesirable intimacy, if not complicity.

By the time I had completed my survey of my company the waiter brought my food, and bleated drearily, "Pot of tea. Butter' zgone."

"Well, where has it gone?" said I, thinking for the moment that the idiot had dropped it.

"Butter' zgone," he bleated again. I got annoyed.

"So I see; quite gone. Don't talk about it; fetch some more."

"Zome more zgone?" The man was a perfect fool.

"No! More butter!"

After he had departed, bewildered and reproachful, to carry out my bidding, I noticed that there were traces of butter on the thing in front of me.

Other people were also finding trouble with English as now spoken in London. Just behind me I overheard the query:—

"Chelly, blom pouding, or draifel?"

And this was Merrie England! I sighed.

"G'way!" countered the Adenoid, promptly. He then continued, "I want some more dam, ma."

There was no reply. The two friends had now reached the "She sez"—"Sez I" stage of confidence, which is the most difficult to interrupt. But the child was no sensitive plant; he laid a sticky paw on the velvet-clad arm next him:—

"Ma! I want some more dam."

"Give over, Leo! You're not going to; you've 'ad enough. Give over, or I'll fetch you such a slap in a——" The admonition died away in the recital which was resumed.

I thought he was going to cry. Not he! He put out his tongue at his mother, and then at me again. 'Pon my word, I admired the little devil's spirit. The last thing I wished him to do was to weep, and so break up the party prematurely—before it had received its lesson; and I determined to humour him. With a furtive glance round, I protruded my tongue. He grinned. I smiled back. So far we were all square, and the child's responsiveness gave me a sudden inspiration. I might make use of him as an instrument for my purpose! But how?

At this moment the band struck up a rollicking air, and the vender of tripe at last looked up from his paper.

"Wot's this—'A Little Bit Off the Top'?"

"Go on," replied the lady friend. "It's 'Come Where the Booze is Cheaper.'"

I glanced at the programme. The piece was a selection of English airs; but, with the exception of this and a few other numbers, the entire list was composed of foreign music. This again aroused my militant patriotism, and I leaned over the balustrade to look at the band. There it was, just beneath us, so placed that the occupants of our table or of that on either side could easily have dropped things on to the performers. The shiny bald head of the conductor caught my eye. It was almost vertically below and between myself and Leo. Myself and—*Leo!* Leo—the instrument! Why should not little Leo drop something? That would be action, possibly productive of reaction, which might cause two birds to be killed with one stone.

Something—yes! But what?

I sat back in my chair, and, in order to keep the "instrument" mellow and in tune, again protruded my tongue. Then, whilst seeking inspiration, I allowed my gaze to wander round the hall. A number of the customers were, of course, foreigners; but amongst the scores eating, drinking, and listening to the music were many obvious Britons. They were nearly all young-feller-

me-lads, and were accompanied either by Gladstone bags, underneath which were strapped hockey-sticks, or by big hats, under which were the young things they were escorting.

As I looked round, between mouthfuls of "zgone," from one group to another, my attention was attracted to a charmingly pretty girl seated at a short distance from me. She was trying to eat neatly a large and sticky piece of confectionery, while the half-furled veil on the edge of her hat was striving to prevent the consummation of her desire. So far all had gone well, and she had introduced one end of the coveted object between her lips. Her pretty white teeth had actually closed on it, when down came the veil with a run. The sudden strain was too much for the delicacy. It broke in two, and fell on to the table with a splash. As the brown shell crumpled up a viscid white fluid oozed out.

"Oh, dear!" she laughed, spluttering.

"My word!" said the girl next her. "That's done it!"

It had!

I beckoned to Number Thirteen. He did not see. I nearly called "Waiter!" but stopped just in time. I might need this fellow as a friend. Patriot as I am, I happen to possess a smattering of foreign languages sufficient to prevent my making use of the word "Kellner." "Ober," I whispered, confidentially, and the man was at my side in a moment.

"What's the brown thing that young lady's got on her plate?"

"Zauzage and mashed."

"No, no—over *there*." I pointed. The damsel was too busy wiping her sleeve to notice my lapse of manners.

"Ach! Chogolate églair."

"Are they—er—nice?"

"Yes, vair goot—vhip gream inside, ausgezeichnet, speciality of ze haus."

"I CUT AN ÉCLAIR IN TWO, AND SURREPTITIOUSLY PUSHED ONE HALF OVER TOWARDS HIM."

"Bring me a plateful. A dozen." He looked mystified. "Don't you understand? Twelve—zwölf éclairs."

With a muttered exclamation the startled man vanished.

While he was gone I laid ground-bait by winking alluringly at Leo. When the waiter placed in front of me a dish of long pieces of pastry all sticky and brown on top, the child's eyes assumed a more congested look than ever, and his snuffling became as painful to hear as that of an aged pug scenting a chop. Pointing to the dish, he said :—

"Ma, I want some of *them*."

His mother was now quite absorbed. To judge from chance words, she was discussing the unsavoury details of the latest murder, which was at the moment a universal topic, in spite of the well-meant efforts of the daily Press to allay morbid curiosity by keeping reports on the subject down to several columns a day. Again did a sticky hand essay to attract a neglectful parent's attention. But, vexed at the interruption to the spicy narrative of horrors to which she was listening, she did not turn her head.

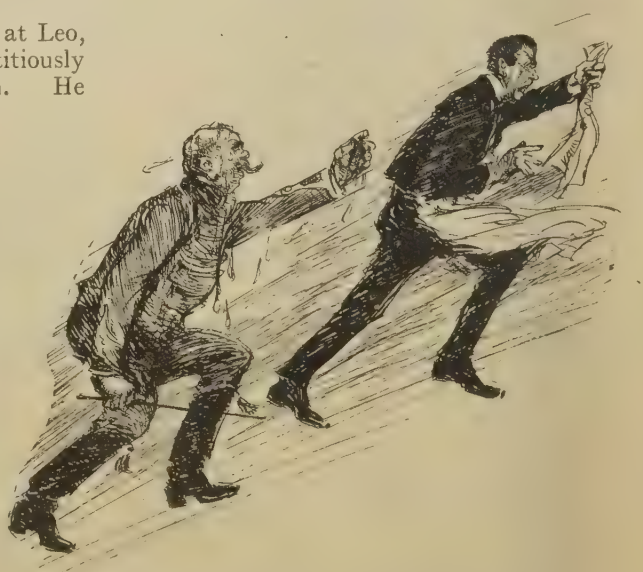
"No, *deear ;* you're not to *do* it. Sit down and give over."

It was my chance. Nodding hard at Leo, I cut an éclair in two, and surreptitiously pushed one half over towards him. He watched it with bulging eyes—seized it—began to eat. Meanwhile I toyed with one. The sickly thing was full of a glutinous mess, but I made much play of enjoyment, smiling the while at my victim. He soon disposed of his share—inside his mouth, outside his mouth, and on his hands. I shoved over the other half. Again did he try to do his duty ; but the last inch disappeared slowly, and I could see that mummie's little lamb had now had more than enough, and would not spoil the plan in my mind from any desire to eat the means whereby it was to be effected.

The conductor's baton rattled. The next piece on the programme was a "Rhapsodie Hongroise." I have always thought that the average orchestra is rather weak in its rendering of rhapsodies. To interpret this class of music properly necessitates that the performers should be carried away, and Britons can rarely work up to the accumulative frenzy of the climax. Possibly the foreigners down below would do better than the stolid Anglo-Saxon, especially as some might be playing their own national music. In any case I would try to ensure that a frenzy would be reached this evening.

The band struck up, the music starting in that misleading, humdrum way which to the uninitiated gives no sign of the culmination. The time for me to intervene had almost come. Papa, mamma, and lady friend were all occupied ; baby alone was attentive. Looking over the edge to get my alignment, I quietly placed a couple of éclairs on the ground between two pillars at the edge of the gallery near my left foot. I then caught Leo's eye, assumed a leer of invitation, and wagged my head to the lilt of the music. I felt rather a beast, but it had to be done. The little fellow was evidently highly strung and musical, for as the "Hooded Death of Hindustan," hypnotized by the drone of the reed-pipe, sways in response to every motion of the snake-charmer, so did Leo, open-mouthed and snuffling to the rhythm, imitate my movements.

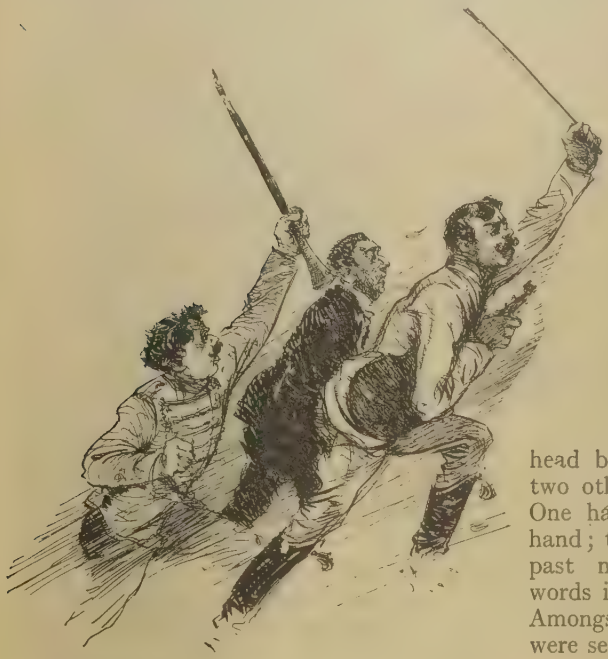
The music dragged slightly. The performers wanted inspiration ; they needed ginger. I had no ginger ; but I had éclairs. I took one and, screened partly by a friendly flower-vase on the balustrade, leant over the edge, aimed carefully, and dropped my bomb. I had time, before I drew back, to see it burst on the bald head beneath. Passing the whole dish of



"THEY RACED PAST ME PANTING AND MUTTERING STRANGE WORDS IN CZECH, MAGYAR, OR POSSIBLY RUSSIAN."

éclairs to my young friend, I again nodded. Children are curiously imitative; with a chuckle of delight, Leo grabbed one and hurled it over.

Though the drag in the rhapsody now became more marked, the music continued. I believe these musician fellows are trained to go on playing when anything unusual happens, in order to allay possible panics. Their discipline was to be tested highly.



I gently propelled overboard with my left foot the missiles already laid on the floor, seized my bill, and rose, giving my trusty ally one farewell leer. He was deeply engrossed in the game, and, with the lack of moderation peculiar to youth, was heaving éclairs over as fast as he could grab them. I was sorry, but I had no control over him. I walked swiftly to the cashier's desk and paid my bill. "Number Thirteen" was, by chance, close at hand. Pressing a *douceur* into his willing palm, I said:—

"I think those people are throwing the food about."

We both looked towards table thirteen. The music had not quite stopped; but the nature of the instrumental and vocal sounds that were wafted up from below suggested to me—from what I had read—portions of the score of some modern operas. A subdued murmur also was rising from the body of the hall. "Number Thirteen" and I distinctly saw the child twice throw something over the rail. Then his father, looking up, observed his offspring reach for the last missile in the dish. There was a scream from both ladies and a shriek from the little one as the brutal parent leaned across the table and roughly seized in one of his huge paws the tiny hand which grasped the confectionery. Under this additional pressure the dainty must have burst, for from between the father's begemmed fingers exuded spurts of cream and chocolate—the indubitable and damning proof of guilt.

The orderly-minded Teuton was aghast. "Zoh!" he murmured. "Aber das ist fatal!"

"Ja," I replied; "fatal!" Giving him a gentle push towards what was probably going to be the centre of the coming cyclone, I added, "So 'was macht man nicht," and walked quietly downstairs.

Half-way down I was met by a rabid person in uniform carrying a violin-bow. He was taking the stairs three at a time, and looked as if he had been interrupted in the middle of a shampoo. A short head behind, running neck and neck, came two others, also in uniform, also demented. One had the stick of a bass drum in his hand; the other waved an oboe. They raced past me panting and muttering strange words in Czech, Magyar, or possibly Russian. Amongst the "also ran," close behind, were several waiters and the major-domo.

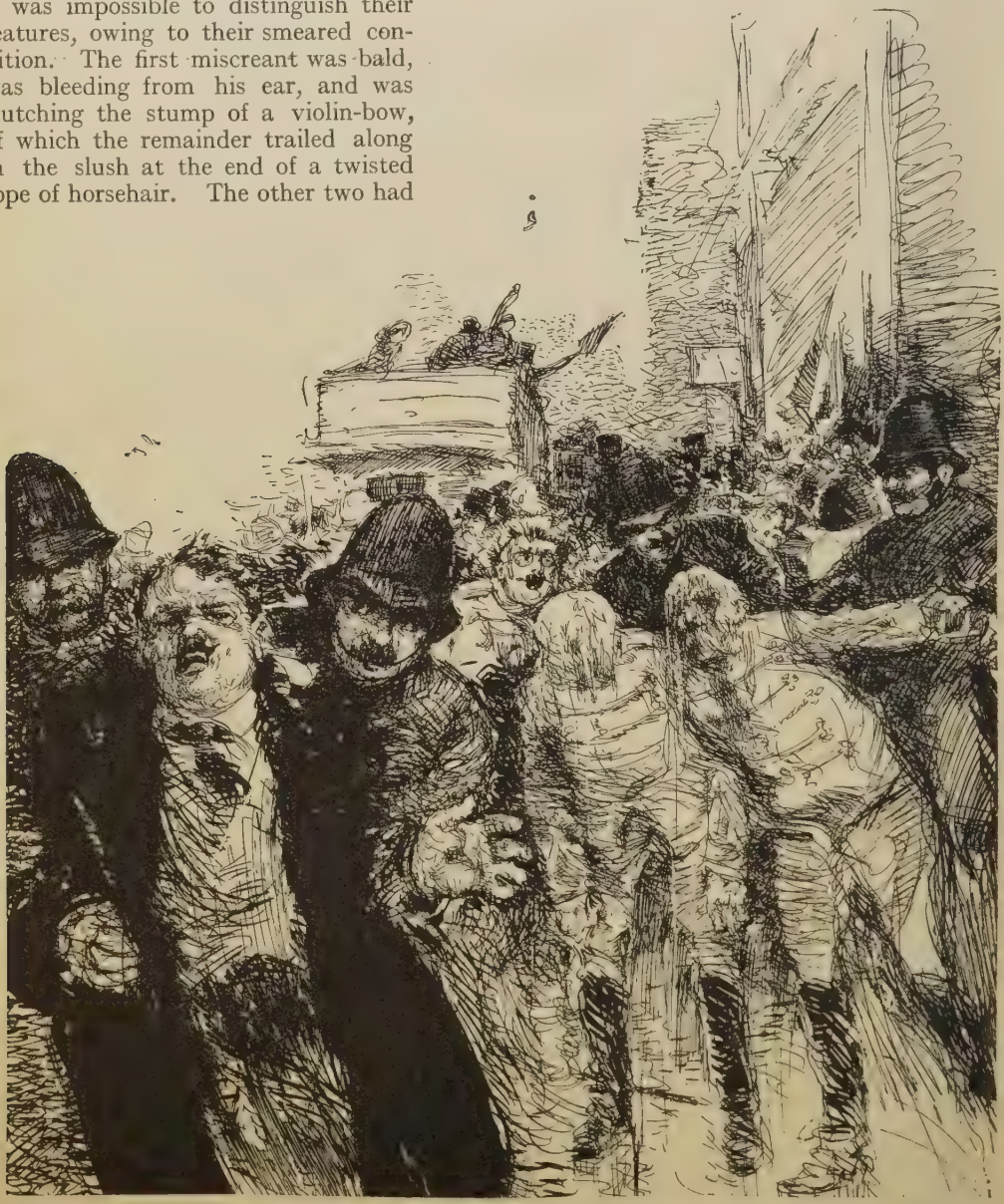
By the time I reached the door of the restaurant the uproar in the gallery had become really scandalous. However, it was not my business, and I strolled out into the shining streets feeling considerably better than I had all day. I had done something for my country.

Fortified with a large-size cigar, purchased at the nearest tobacconist's, I walked back towards the scene of my labours in order to discover, if possible, their result. The crowd on the pavement seemed thicker than ever as I approached the hostelry, and a procession, headed by a huge policeman, was forcing its way from the portico through the heaving mass as a battleship cleaves the main.

I became one unit of the wave of humanity driven back towards the edge of the pavement. The leading constable forged through the crowd, shouting his slogan, "Pass along there! Pass along, please!" Behind him came two policemen, hustling along a big man in an overcoat from which fluttered

strips of astrachan. He must have been a desperate character, for the guardians of the peace were none too gentle in their treatment of him. Indeed, some of the crowd were moved to cries of "Shime!" "Don't 'andle 'im so crool." Then followed three officers, each gently but firmly escorting a gesticulating man clad in a plum-coloured bastard Hussar uniform, consisting of short coat, skin-tight breeches, and long boots with silly little tassels dangling from their tops. Though none of the prisoners wore hats it was impossible to distinguish their features, owing to their smeared condition. The first miscreant was bald, was bleeding from his ear, and was clutching the stump of a violin-bow, of which the remainder trailed along in the slush at the end of a twisted rope of horsehair. The other two had long, dark hair clinging across their eyes; one carried a half of some wood wind instrument.

In the rear, unescorted, followed a lady carrying a small boy in Scotch attire. She was shrieking. He was shrieking. He was also excitedly waving in the air one dirty brown fist, while he tugged with the other hand at some obviously-drowned animal clinging to the lady's neck. Behind her back hung a wisp of feathers. Strangely enough, though it was not raining,



"EACH GENTLY ESCORTED A GESTICULATING MAN CLAD IN A PLUM-COLOURED BASTARD HUSSAR UNIFORM."

all the members of this curious gang were dripping wet, and were smeared with glistening patches, specially evident upon the ruffians in fancy-dress. It was a disgraceful exhibition of the seamy side of the life of a great city, and I drew back in disgust until the procession, with its numerous rag-tag and bobtail, had gone by.

The crowd was "passing along" according to order, and I succeeded in crossing the pavement and, after a struggle against the tide of humanity ebbing from the restaurant, in reaching one of the expanding gilt doors in its portico. Under its lee I clung on like a piece of seaweed to a sluice-gate. A large hall-porter was wiping his hands on a duster. He looked me up and down and scowled.

"What's up, porter?" said I, in an airy tone. "Case of pocket-picking?"

Eyeing my clothes, my boots, my hat, he paused mistrustful. I resented this inspection; it was offensive, and reminded me of what had taken place inside the building. Then my fat belted cigar and its aroma came into play. With a final polish of his hands he beamed.

"No, sir. I didn't see the parties till the scrap was nearly over, but I believe that the gent with the retriever collar to his overcoat 'ad some words with the 'Ungarian Horchestra, and three of 'em run up and give 'im wot for and a thick ear with their instruments."

"Three to one?" I ejaculated. "Did they hurt him much?"

"I guess they got a bit of their own back; but 'e's a man wot can look after 'imself and don't lay down to it."

"You know him, then?"

"Not to *know* 'im, but I've orften seen 'im perform and passed the time of day with 'im. It's old Benjy Bilkheimer."

"Indeed!"

"Yes—*you* know—the acroback. Retired from the perfession now and keeps a tidy little pub—the Dressed Crab, full licence—down Spitalfields way. Teaches Jew-jitsu or somethink of that. 'E was one of the nuts, and no error, in 'is time. The 'Injerrubber 'Ercules, or the 'Uman Borgonstricter,' they called 'im. But I expect you've seen 'im do a turn at one of the 'alls?'

And this was the man whose neck I had contemplated punching! Verily and indeed had I avoided the ill-luck of the fatal number. I whistled gently.

"Yes, that sounds as if he were a bit of a fighter, certainly; but it was heavy odds," I said.

"That's right; it was a bit of odds—but I do like a man as fights fair. There was no call for 'im to pour a pot of cocoa and a jug of custard over people. It's an 'ound's trick. Real dirty, I call it."

"Did he actually do that?"

"I can't say as I saw 'im, because I didn't get upstairs till the scrap was over, worse luck; but I 'andled a few of them on the way out, and I 'aven't got the stuff off my 'ands yet. Throwing drink about, even if it is temperance, is foul fighting, that's what it is; and I shouldn't 'ave thought it of a man of Benjy's class. But it's in the breed, I suppose."

The porter ceased his account for a minute while he attended to his duties. "Keep back there, please. The restaurong is closed for the evening, sir. No admittance this way, miss. No, ma'am, there's been no fire nor murder in the 'all, only a slight accident to a bandsman. This way out."

I clung to the gate; though the outgoing stream had thinned a little, I still had to hang on. Amongst those who slowly pressed past were a young man and a girl—both British. He was vainly trying to smooth out the corrugations in a top-hat.

"That fellow's hat has been in it," I remarked to the doorkeeper.

"Yes; the 'atters will come off best out of this. It's their benefit to-night." He looked hard at me. "You've 'ad a bit of a tumble yourself, sir?"

"Oh, no," replied I, with a somewhat guilty conscience, rather taken aback. "Why do you think so?"

"Why, *your* 'at wouldn't come to no 'arm for a bit of brushing. No offence, sir, but just look in that mirror."

I looked. Not only was my face slightly streaked, but my hat was thickly spattered with mud—the legacy of the green atrocity that had barked at me an hour earlier!

"Ah, that was a taxi splashed me."

"Yes, narsty things, them taxis. I'll give it a brush-up, if you'll allow me, sir. I 'ave a brush round the corner."

While the hat was being tended and I was trying to improve the condition of my face, I became thoughtful, not to say a little remorseful. It was not only that my hat was a new one. Its state explained so much. How much was it answerable for?

"That's better, sir." And a renovated topper was handed to me.

"Thanks. Did these—er—brawlers do much damage?"

He chuckled. "I never see such a mess as there was up above—not for years and

years and donkeys' ears! What with tables turned over, crockery smashed, food spilled! When the four of 'em 'ad clinched, it was nigh impossible to get them apart. The old Borgonstricter 'ad a strangle 'olt on one, and 'is legs tied in 'alf-'itches round the other two. It wasn't till they fetched up the 'and-'ydrant and 'ose, and let old Benjy 'ave it cold in the ear-'ole, that they broke away. The missus was right in it too, and pitched a long fairy-tale about a drunken furriner with a bruised face and a top-'at 'oo'd tried to poison the child. She let the bandsmen 'ave something on appro. on *'is* account."

"Where is the—foreigner?" I still had sufficient spirit left to be annoyed at this description of myself.

"'E's done a guy—if there ever was one; but the woman was fair dotty, and I don't believe there never was none. A furriner poisoning 'er kid! Why, the little nipper was fit enough to do 'is bit for the old firm. 'E nearly chewed one of the conductor's ears orf. Poisoned? Not 'alf! I seen the man's ear."

Puzzled as I was by all these negatives, I dared not interrupt.

"When the lot was dragged apart 'alf-drownded, some fool scratches 'imself against a switch. Turns off the lights in the gallery. Then, of course, someone else must sing out 'Fire!' That put the lid on it! The women were screaming and fainting in 'eaps. I can tell you, it was as near panic as 'kiss your hand.' Case for an inquess it would 'ave been, if the boss 'imself 'adn't gone up and made the remains of the band play slow music. He's up there now with some of the cashiers, booking names and complaints. Restaurong is closed for this evening, sir," he concluded, in a louder tone, to a would-be customer.

"I'm so glad I wasn't there," said I. "What a hot-tempered lot these foreigners are! They're positively dangerous."

"Oh, the waiters weren't in this, except to try and separate the scrappers, and get kicked in the face and soused. It wasn't their funeral."

"No; I meant the musicians."

"Love you, sir, the bandsmen ain't furriners. They calls 'em the 'Puce 'Ungarian Horchestra'; but that's to please the class of customers we get. They come here to see life, and want something Continental and wicked-like. That's why we gives 'em French me-nus, German beer, and everythink of that."

"A RENOVATED TOPPER WAS HANDED ME."

"The band not foreigners!" I gasped.

"I don't think. They're Bert 'Uggins' little lot from Peckham Rye way. Most of 'em used to play at our 'Armonic Club not so long ago. Bettered theirselves now."

"Was—is—Mr.—Huggins—the conductor?"

"That's right—with the bald 'ead."

My pouch-eyed Balkan prince—Bert Huggins, of Peckham Rye! Incapable of speech, I made a feeble and involuntary gesture of disgust with my hand, and accidentally threw away my cigar.

"What's the time?" I asked, irrelevantly.

"Time, sir? Six-thirty, sir."

"Good night, porter. I must be getting home now," said I, doing the necessary.

"Yes; it's goin' to be a wet evenin'. Good night, and thank you, sir."

I went.

Weather-Wit.

THE FIRST WEATHER PROPHECY.
(Published the day of the Flood.)

"The fair weather and drought prevailing throughout the world for the past month will continue to-day, with warm, southerly winds, becoming variable. There is no rain in sight."

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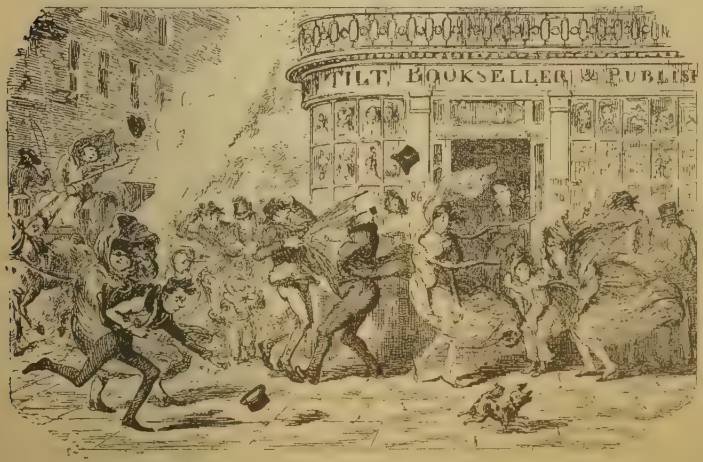
IT is probable that the weather, more especially the British variety, has been the occasion of more humour — good-humour and ill-humour—than any other institution. The small boy's definition in his school essay, "The weather is a thing you talk about when you have not got anything else to say," ignores the essential importance of the weather. It is not only a great subject—it is also a great joke. The remark one hears to the effect that "This weather's no joke" is not to be taken seriously. And that other remark, "Funny weather we're having," enshrines a literal truth.

"The weather," one humorist has written, "is like the Government, always in the wrong. In summer-time we say it is stifling; in winter that it is killing; in spring and autumn we find fault with it for being neither the one thing nor the other, and wish it would make up its mind. If it is fine we say the country is being ruined for want of rain; if it does rain we pray for fine weather. If December passes without snow, we indignantly demand to know what has become of our good old-fashioned winters, and talk as if we had been cheated out of something that we had bought and paid for; and when it does snow our language is a disgrace to a Christian nation. We shall never be content until each man makes his own weather and keeps it to himself."

It was Mark Twain who wrote a book and prefaced it with a few meteorological descriptions: "The weather contained in this book." Then he asked the reader to select therefrom his own weather for any particular period of the story.

As to cold, we have been told of a place where the cows froze stiff all the winter, and when spring came they thawed out and supplied the inhabitants with ice-cream all the summer. Sydney Smith has described a day so hot that he wished to strip off his flesh and sit in his bones. There have been times so wet that the very ducks began to climb trees, and fogs so thick that a man has kissed a pretty neighbour in mistake for his own wife or sister.

It is a transatlantic humorist who reminds us of the probable experience of Noah's contemporaries of the first weather prophecy. He, of course, had prophesied



MARCH.
By George Cruikshank.—Reproduced from "The Comic Almanack," 1835.

SUPEREROGATION (A RECENT SKETCH IN HOLBORN).
Reproduced by kind permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

"Fine weather," and then came the Deluge.

But every humorist has had a shot at the weather, and no country has been so prolific in weather humour as our own, unless, indeed, it is America, where meteorological vagaries are almost as trying as with us.

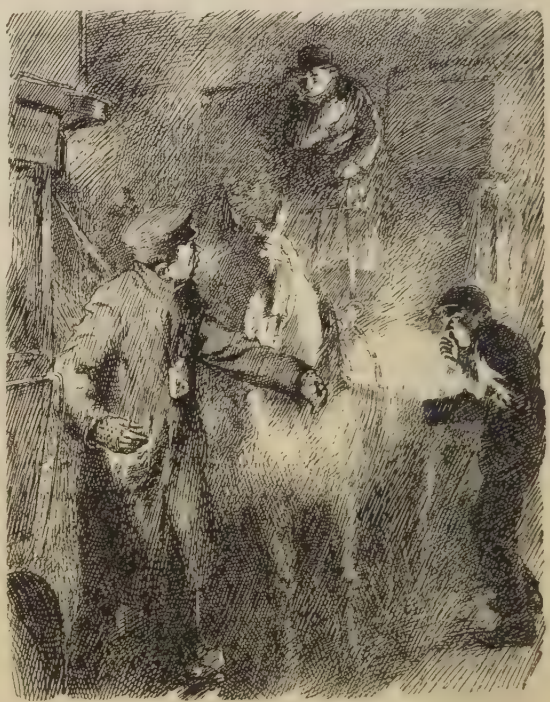
The March winds and April showers, which Cruikshank delineated in "The Comic Almanac" for 1835, have of themselves inspired the pens and pencils of a host of writers. John Leech made many drawings dealing with the weather in the pages of *Punch* and elsewhere. Thackeray wrote an amusing paper on "How to Ascertain the Weather," full of useful hints.

"Perhaps the best method," he wrote, "of ascertaining the fact of its being warm or cold is to go out into the air; but, if you are unable to do this, and a person coming in from out of doors is seen to rub his hands you may presume that the atmosphere is chilly.

"When the water-carts are particularly active you may expect rain; and if a flash of lightning is visible, prepare for thunder." This joke is a perennial one, as appears in the adjoining illustration.

"When you see the advertisement of a flower show, it would be prudent to provide yourself on the day named with an umbrella.

"If your water has not come into your cistern you may conclude there has been frost, unless you happen to be in arrears with your rates, when the phenomenon may be otherwise accounted for."



A DETERMINED OPTIMIST.—"Well, there's one good thing abaht this 'ere weather, Chawlie. The flies don't bother yer."
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IN CASE OF SNOW.—Seasonable suggestion to our Out-of-Town Brethren.
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How terrible snow can be in winter our cousins across the Atlantic know better than we, and the mockery of Sunnyside Villa and other suburban "nests" is well depicted by one of their artists herewith.

"What you need," once remarked a doctor to his patient, "is change of climate."

"Change of climate!" cried the man. "That's what's the matter with me. If the climate

Not Such Disagreeable Weather for the Haymakers as Some People Think.

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A century and a half ago people used to depend upon the weather prognostications in Partridge's Almanac. One day Partridge himself put up at a country inn for dinner. The hostler advised him to stay the night, as it would certainly rain. "Nonsense!" said Partridge, and proceeded on his way. Soon a heavy shower fell, which so impressed the traveller that he instantly rode back to the inn and offered the hostler half a crown if he would tell him how he knew rain was imminent.

"Well," replied the man, with a grin, pocketing the coin, "the truth is, we have Partridge's Almanac here; and he's such a liar that whenever he promises a fine day we know it will be foul. To-day is set down as fine." The weather-prophet, like many other weather-prophets before and since, passed on discomfited.

Haymaking in rainy weather can still be made exhilarating, as witness Mr. Caldecott's *Punch* drawing, "Not would only keep the same a few days running I would be all right."

This mutability of the weather reminds one of the indignant customer who returned to the shopman saying:—

"Look here, that barometer you sold me a month ago has got out of order. It won't work."

"No wonder, sir. Look what a lot of weather it's 'ad lately!"

Conductor.—"There's no need to stand' sir. Plenty of room up in front."

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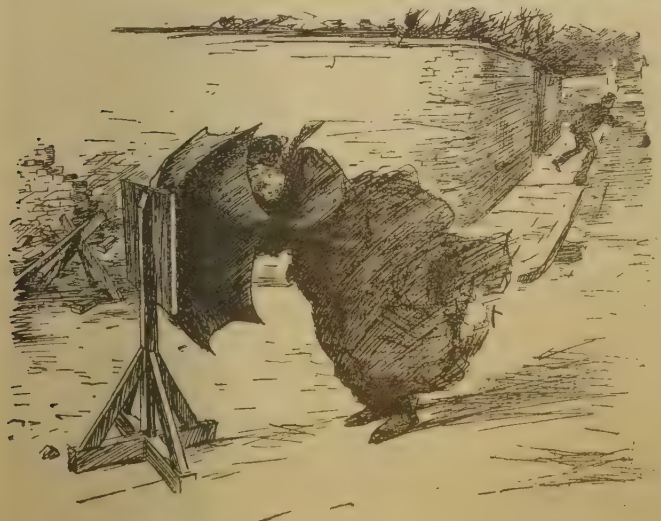

"Drat These March Winds. I Can't 'Ardly Move Against 'Em!"

Reproduced by kind permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

such disagreeable weather for the hay-makers as some people think."

It will be remembered that the illustrious Mr. Dooley, after much cogitation, came to the conclusion, which he confided to his friend Hennessy, that "There's two kinds iv weather—human weather and weather-bureau weather."

"No wan knows," continued the philosopher, "what causes bureau weather. No wan knows what causes human weather. Hogan says th' seasons is caused be th' sun movin' fr'm th' thropic iv Cancer to th' thropic iv Capsicorn, an' whin 'tis in wan place, we suffer fr'm th' cold, an' that's winter, an' when 'tis in th' other place we suffer fr'm th' heat, an' that's summer. Hogan says it, wan man's guess is as good as another. That's our weather.

THE CAREFUL MOTHER.

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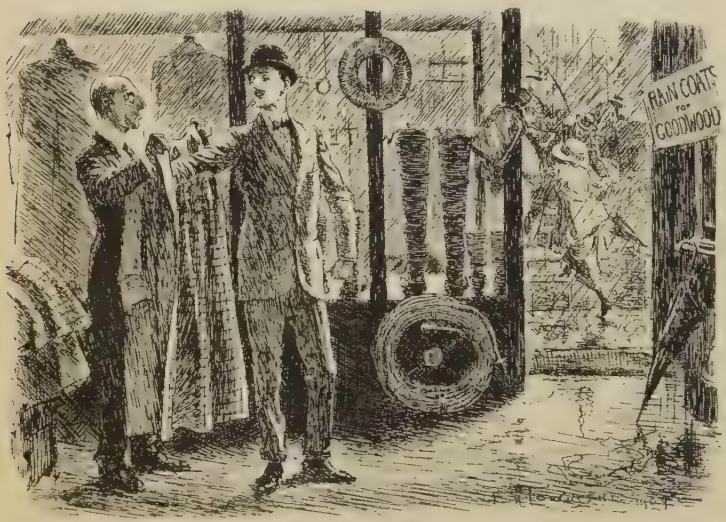

CUSTOMER (trying on mackintosh): "Good weather for you—and mackintoshes."

Salesman: "Yes, sir; but, on the other hand, trade in garden-hose is absolutely at a standstill."

Reproduced by kind permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

"Th' Weather Bureau ought to lave it alone an' shtick to its own, that rains whin they'se a high pressure in Maine, an' snows whin they'se a low pressure in Texas. Th' Weather Bureau weather is good parlor weather, but th' kind we have to dhrive sthreet-cars in is out-iv-dure weather, subject to all the rigors of but Hogan can't tell ye why, if that's so, th' days don't get hotter from March sthraight through to October. Some people says th' summer's caused be fires in th' bow'ls iv th' earth, where hell used to be whin I was a boy; but if ye believe that, why ain't we cooked th' year round? Father Kelly thinks 'tis th' spots on th' sun does it, an' Schwarzmeister thinks 'tis th' brewer's agent. Iverybody has a guess, an'

A Capital Method of Preventing your being run into in a dense fog is said to be to carry a loud motor-horn, and to sound it every few seconds as you walk along.

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THE PHILOSOPHIC VIEW.—Mrs. Topflatte: "Anyway, George, we oughtn't to complain; it does very nicely as an ice-box."

From "Puck"—English Copyright, by permission of James Henderson & Sons, Ltd.

th' climate. The Weather Bureau's weather is on a map, an' our weather is in th' air. That's why th' pro-fisser fails an' Clancy's leg is a gr-reat success. 'Tis an out-iv-dure leg."

"I don't believe in anny kind iv weather prognostifications," said Mr. Hennessy.

"Well," said Mr. Dooley, "if I was goin' into th' business I niver wud prophesy till th' day afther."

There are some interesting examples of philosophy as regards the weather also suggested by some of the drawings shown herewith—as for instance, that of Mr. Pegram's bus conductor, who congratulates himself upon the absence of flies in winter. But there is nothing to beat the story of the American tourist who came across a man out West sitting on a stump. "How's the weather treating you?" he asked. "Pretty tolerable, stranger," replied the man. "I had some trees to cut down, but a cyclone came along and levelled them for me." "That was a piece of luck," cried the tourist. "Yes; and then," continued the man, "there was a storm, and the lightning set fire to the brushwood and saved me the trouble of burning it." "Remarkable! But what are you doing now?" "Oh, I'm just waiting for an earthquake to come along and shake the potatoes out of the ground."

THE SIMPLE LIFE.—Charwoman: "If yer please, sir, th' landlord says as 'ow 'e can't do nothing, 'cos the thatcher's busy with the ricks."

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SEEING THE OTHER HALF.—Fashionable Slummer (anxious to say the right thing): "Beastly weather for motoring, isn't it?"

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Once an old Scots weather-prophet at Whittinghame informed Mr. Balfour that "It's gaun to rain seventy-twa days, sir."

"Come, come!" said the statesman. "Surely the world was entirely flooded in forty days."

"Aye, aye!" was the response; "but the warld wasna' sae weel drained as it is noo."

There have been many amusing drawings of adventures in the

THE COOLEST THING IN MERRY-GO-ROUNDS.
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March winds, but surely few funnier than Mr. Raven Hill's dear old lady striving to make headway against her conception of a very sturdy and obstinate Boreas.

How well we know that phrase, "Plenty of room," most frequently applied to over-congested clumps of human beings in trains, omnibuses, and theatre pits; but surely the prospect of room was never so uninviting as when the situation is as it is shown in the sketch on page 543.

Some people are never satisfied, and even the prospect of making a small fortune out of mackintoshes does not damp one tradesman's grief at the slump in garden-hose. Another drawing exhibits a careful fowl protecting her brood with umbrellas.

It is an art to be able to say the right thing—even about the weather—at the right time, but the benevolent slummer who was engaged in "seeing the other half" cannot be said to have been happily proficient.

Never is wet weather so trying as in the country and to those who are endeavouring to lead the simple life. Its miseries are well exhibited in Mr. Gunning King's drawing.

No one likes to be, as Mr. Mantalini expressed it, a "demd damp, moist, unpleasant body."

The workings of indoor heating apparatus are often very trying to the patient householder, but let us comfort ourselves in thinking that it is only in America that the steam-radiator could become coated with frost and elicit from the long-suffering housewife the remark, "Anyway, George, we oughtn't to complain; it does very nicely as an ice-box."

Of all aspects of the weather, fog is, perhaps, the least amusing in itself, and yet it has been provocative of a great deal of amusement in the world. Fogs have always been the friend of farce. It is rather tragic when you are caught in one and have to find your way home in it. It is then that Mr. Pears's device of a motor-horn would come in useful.

Why is it no one has thought of an aquatic merry-go-round for the seaside? In such a summer as this last it would enjoy enormous popularity.

Lastly, we often hear popular expressions used unmeaningly, but the weather-worn bus horse who volunteered in a certain contingency to eat his hat was not going outside the limits of the normal. How well the artist has caught their despairing expressions!

DURING NOON HOUR.—"Whew! If this isn't the hottest day we've had, I'll eat my hat!"
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Jack Halsey's Unmooring.

By EDWARD PRICE BELL.

Illustrated by Frank Gillett, R.I.

"WHAT'S the use to bring it out at all, Jack? The agony's over."

Jack looked at his wife, across his face, shadow-like, passing a twitch of pain.

"You've fought a good fight. Working day and night, doing everything yourself, spending nothing for help these many years, you've almost killed yourself. The paper's dead; let it rest. Stay at home to-night. The children are asleep. Supper over, we'll go for a quiet stroll, you and I, alone. We'll walk out on the narrow hill-road, where the trees interlace so bewitchingly, and where the moon and stars look so close and so lovely in the river. There was where I learned to love you, Jack; there was where you asked me to be your wife!"

Jack covered his face with his hands.

"Come! In two minutes I'll be ready; in ten minutes we'll be care-free lovers again."

The man pushed away from the table, straightened himself, and looked down at his wife with the ghost of a smile.

"Margie, every day you're a fresh wonder. I thought I knew you years ago. Pshaw! A man *never* knows a woman—never will."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Well, just that. This is my last night's work on the *Mines Mirror*. However good my fight, I've been beaten. To-morrow the sheriff sells me up. We've got nothing but four babies, a black cat, and a yellow dog. And yet, smiling like a bride, you say to me, we'll wander in the old haunts to-night, and be care-free lovers again!"

Margie rose, puckered Jack's thin lips between her fingers, and kissed them thrice.

"Of course. Now let's get ready."

Jack took down his battered straw hat, set it on the back of his head, and folded his arms.

"I'll tell you, Margie. Let me bring out the *Mines Mirror* on time once more. I'll put my valedictory in double-leaded type. Everything will be regular till the bailiff walks in. Then—when and whither you like!"

Stepping out into the dark, Jack paused.

For a moment he stood by the threshold, silent and motionless, then suddenly stole back into the room. Margie had lowered her head on the table, hidden her face between her arms, and was sobbing as if her heart would break. Contriving to force down a great lump in his throat, Jack laid his hands softly upon her hair.

"There, my poor angel, don't cry! To-morrow, once more, the sun will rise over this valley; mayhap he'll bring healing in his wings."

Making his way slowly towards the office of the *Mines Mirror*, Jack Halsey felt strangely helpless. Somehow all power, all competence, seemed suddenly to have gone out of him. His old straw hat drawn forward on his eyebrows, he walked with his hands in his pockets, his shoulders slightly stooped, his eyes on the pavement. He was tall, loosely knit, and pale. His eyes, neither grey nor blue, were a little of both. His hair was thin and fair. His face was long and almost as innocent of beard as a woman's. The gloom of the man was in a congruous setting. He moved along a street dusty, ill-lighted, and deserted. Right and left loomed vacant shops and houses. To Jack's hearing the very leaves of the shade trees rustled as he remembered to have heard skirts rustle in a chamber of death.

The office of the *Mines Mirror*, comprising a single small room, was at the top of a creaking stairway in the centre of the village. Trudging up this stairway, Jack unlocked the door and pushed into a dark, warm air, redolent of ink and tobacco. Lighting the

lamp above the imposing-stone, and also the one above his heaped-up case of wet brevier, he lifted a window and looked out into the starry night. On either side of the valley the hills bulked brokenly against the sky. At one edge of the village the river brawled along its rocky channel, the sound seeming to Jack unusually distinct—a circumstance due, perhaps, to the deep stillness of the night.

"JACK LAID HIS HANDS SOFTLY UPON HER HAIR."

Shutting the window, Jack lit his cob-pipe and sat down in his cane-bottomed editorial chair to think.

Just across the hills was the spot of land where he was born, the youngest of three brothers. When their parents died they sold the farm and divided the money equally. Frank, the eldest, became a famous engineer; and Joe, the second son, an even more famous surgeon. Only a few days ago Jack had seen Joe in the city, his sharp face clouded by thought, going about his work in a big, one-seated motor-car with six low-lisping cylinders under its protrusive engine-hood. Jack's first impulse was to rush out with a joyous shout of recognition. Then, remembering his old straw hat and shabby suit, he turned quickly down a side-street.

"Not that Joe wouldn't have been as glad to see me as I was to see him," muttered Jack, thoughtfully. "We boys always were particularly happy together. True, neither Frank nor Joe has paid any attention to me for many years. Still, I dare believe both think of me often, and love me yet."

In Jack's character, from earliest childhood a moody and sensitive character, burned two deep-seated passions—a love for the old homestead and a love for writing. His share of the money from the farm he stuffed into his pockets, went a little way down the valley to the big town, bought a small newspaper outfit, and started the *Mines Mirror* in the flourishing coal-mining village within an hour's walk of the old home-place. Here, as a very young editor, he met Marjorie Friend, youngest daughter of the village preacher. Marjorie—everyone called her Margie—was a beautiful girl, with golden hair, blue eyes, rosy cheeks, a fresh, sweet laugh, and a heart full of romance and emotion. At their first meeting Jack surrendered unconditionally. Far from handsome, yet he at once attracted Marjorie; and, after she had talked with him a few summer evenings as they strolled by the river, or sat under the big elm in her front garden, she loved him unutterably. Married in six months, in six years they had four children—three lovely girls and a miniature prototype of Jack—and life, not without happiness, was yet hard and anxious enough for them.

"Concerned as I am for the children,"

said Jack, crossing his legs, clasping his hands in his lap, and staring at the type-covered imposing-stone, "my keenest grief is connected with Margie. I can't help thinking how deliciously pretty she used to be. Now she's almost as pale and thin as I am—worked to the bone, her heart gnawed out. I'll wager Margie could have had either Frank or Joe—could have had anybody. Certainly she was the sweetest girl that ever gave to this poor place a touch of glory!"

Suddenly, violently clearing his throat, Jack struggled up from his chair, as if his reflections were strangling him. Throwing off his hat and coat, he rolled his sleeves above his elbows, and made ready for the night's work.

Had Jack none of the ambition, none of the talent, of the Halsey family?

From the first issue his paper was a brilliant literary and not at all a bad financial success. Its quaint poems, its comic matter, its passionate utterances on big affairs—all written by Jack, who wrote everything—were copied in the newspapers and magazines far and wide. From a little boy Jack had written in the woods, and by the waterside, alone. Nobody, not even his own mother, ever saw anything he wrote in those early days. Most of it, wit and humour, philosophy, emanations of the religious spirit, poetry, he destroyed as soon as it was finished. The remainder he locked in a rough little writing-table in his own room. One night his father found him poring over a manuscript by the light of the moon streaming into his bed-chamber.

"Read it to me, Jack."

But the boy was so perturbed, so painfully embarrassed, that his father promptly left the room, grimly smiling, and mumbling to himself:—

"Strangest boy in this country. Wonder what'll become of him?"

Lengthy and gangling though he was, nevertheless Jack long had been the champion swimmer at Blue Crag Reservoir, a fine body of water, higher up where the valley became a gorge, that attracted expert swimmers from far and near. They said of Jack that, diving and swimming, his sinuous figure threaded the water with almost the nimbleness and swiftness of a trout. If he had physical efficiency, had he physical courage? One day a quack doctor came to the village with a band of musicians, and started business in the evening under a gasolene flare. Jack stood in the crowd, listened to the music, followed the quack's harangue, and saw the miners' money flowing into his coffers.

The next morning Jack called on the newcomer.

"If you don't leave town at once," said he, "I'll attack you in my paper, and some of the rude fellows here may consider it in the public interest to hang you."

"If you intend to write me up in your paper," replied the doctor, "you had better make your will first."

The following day—Saturday—was Jack's press day, and the *Mines Mirror* contained a blistering arraignment of the quack. When Jack had run off the paper and sent it out, he put a copy in his pocket and went to see the medical man.

"I've written you up as well as I can," said the tall, pale editor, a queer light in his eyes. "The paper's in the streets. I thought I'd bring your copy myself."

Jack laid the paper before the quack, pointing to the article about him. That same morning one might have seen a motley crew of itinerants quietly disappearing down the valley road.

Among the many effective things Jack wrote for the *Mines Mirror* one article stood forth unmistakably as his masterpiece. It was a tribute to the soldiers—to the men who had fought for their country, and come home, and to the men who had fought for their country, and left their broken bodies on the field. Prominently displayed in the *Mines Mirror*, this tribute created a veritable sensation. It was reproduced, within laurelled columns, in the *World Tribune*, the foremost daily of the country. Soldiers' organizations everywhere wrote to Jack, glorifying him, and telling him his article had been cut out and framed for their club-rooms. One day Jack was sitting on his tall stool at the case, distributing a handful of type, when the door opened, and a huge, dark, hairy, brilliant-eyed, smiling man walked in.

"Where's the editor?" asked this giant.

"I'm the editor," said Jack, getting down from the stool and approaching the visitor, with the handful of type balanced on his left fingers.

"Are you Jack Halsey?"

"Yes," said Jack, extremely nervous.

"Did you write that article about our soldier chaps?"

"Yes," answered Jack, faintly, brushing a lock of thin hair from his forehead with the back of his type-soiled free hand.

"Then, my boy, at last I've the good

fortune to meet one of the rarest spirits of our time. Let me clasp your hand, black though it is with the grime of the trade. My name is Bold McEnnis. Did you ever hear of me?"

Jack's lips trembled.

"Hear of me—of course you have. But you don't know the editor of the *World Tribune* as well as he knows the editor of the *Mines Mirror*. Jack, my dear fellow, your paper, this little mining-town paper of yours, has been on my desk every week since it was born. I've been inexpressibly charmed by your verse. I've roared over your drolleries. As to your master-stuff, time and again some strange, poignant quality in it has caused the lines to melt and swim before my eyes. Finally came the climax—finally came that prose ode to our fighting-men—and I cried aloud, 'I'll go up the valley to-day; I'll see Jack Halsey face to face.'"

That dramatic visit had happened a good many years ago, when Jack was at the zenith of his enthusiasm and prosperity. Before Bold McEnnis left the village—he did not go without breaking bread with the country editor and his little family—he told Jack, if he ever wanted to come down the valley to the big town, there was a good post waiting for him on the *World Tribune*. Bold McEnnis never came again, and never wrote; but often Jack heard from men on the *World Tribune* that he was still the big-hearted, brilliant autocrat of that powerful journal.

By and by something happened in the village that Jack had not counted on. One vein of coal after another was worked out. There were half-a-dozen deserted shafts, their grey, silent timbers marking the landscape like tall skeletons. The miners began to troop across the hills to other diggings. The general population shrank. Many shops were closed. Jack's advertising and job-work fell off. He had no heart any more for his jokes. His quaint, sweet verse was missing. His leading articles lacked the old throb of passion. The subscription list steadily shortened, and at last Jack was so heavily in debt that the wheels of the State were in motion against him.

Midnight.

Jack diligent at the case.

His tall stool pushed aside, he is standing. Over his eyes projects a sweat-stained green eye-shade. His face, close-set to his work, is white and sad, yet alight with energy and thought. He is working unweariedly, rapidly, as if he were quite fresh. His long body sways rhythmically, and as it sways the silence is broken by the sure, swift click of the type against the burnished steel of his composing-rule. On one side of the room is the flimsy editorial table, with a column of pigeon-holes rigged up at the back. On the opposite side stands the hand-press, arms in the air, long black roller ready on the ink-pad. In a corner rises a job-press, with foot-pedal and flywheel. Behind the compositor the imposing-stone, black with type in locked chases, shows the paper nearly "up"—entirely, except a part of one column in an open forme.

To his valedictory Jack added the last stickful with a deep sigh. Then he walked to the editorial table, picked up an envelope, and opened it. The communication was from his old, watchful correspondent at Blue Crag Reservoir. It was written in lead-pencil on ragged-edged scrap paper. There was an unusually large amount of it; this was what first struck Jack. Then he noted that it was not, as ordinarily, composed mainly of personal items.

"It's a story," said he, running earnest eyes down the first page, turning to the next, and reading on with deepening interest.

"Capitally done! Now one knows what makes the river sound so loud to-night."

There were torrential rains in the uplands. The hill-streams were raging. Fields and meadows were under water. The houses of farmers and shepherds were flooded. Much livestock had been drowned. Many people were without food or shelter. The water in Blue Crag Reservoir was rapidly rising.

"What a rattling story!" cried Jack, "for the last issue of the *Mines Mirror!*"

Flattening out the copy on the "cap" case, Jack lit his pipe and fell feverishly to work. His glance was fastened upon the copy, his brow knitted. From the bowl of his cob rose a pale-blue spiral that broke into filmy waves as he moved. Going strong, with his characteristic swing, he made the type fairly rattle into the stick. Suddenly he stopped, removed his pipe, and held his breath, a vague expression in his eyes. Then he put down his stick, strode to the window, and threw it up. The street was deserted, the dark-blue heavens aglitter. Listening a moment, Jack sprang to the door, jerked it open, and bounded down the stairs, bare-armed and bare-headed. Along the street he sped to the nearest corner.

Straight towards him, some way up the cross-street, came a horseman at a gruelling gallop, shouting at the top of his voice. Jack noted the horse's flaming nostrils and streaming mane. At every leap, from under the

crunching hoofs broke showers of sparks. The rider appeared to be a man of small stature—perhaps only a boy. So close did he lean to the horse's neck that the observer could see little of him except a pair of tight-gripping legs and the pointed crown of an old black hat. Jack's first sensation was one of numb bewilderment. Then his blood seemed to curdle with a sense of imminent and prodigious calamity. He felt he ought to fly—ought to run with all his might for home. Nevertheless, he continued to stand stock-still—stiff, staring, breathless.

A rush of wind, a stifling cloud of dust, and the horse, wide-mouthed, was on its hind-legs by Jack's side, the rider clinging, limpet-like, to its upright, lathering body.

"Blue Crag Reservoir!" shouted the horseman.

"Blue—Crag—Reservoir——"

"*Warn the town!* I'm rushing straight on down the valley! The dam at Blue Crag Reservoir is cracking and bulging!"

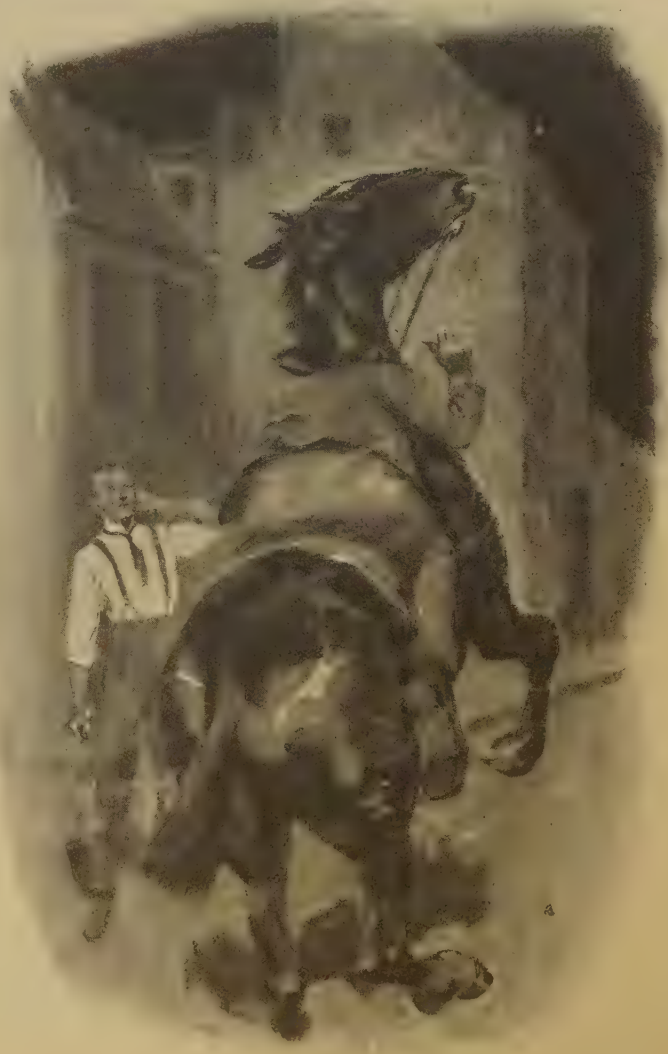
As if dealt a crushing blow, Jack staggered against a tree-box and pressed his hands to his head. The next instant he lifted his eyes; the horseman was gone. Flinging his arms into the air, he sprang forward, shouting like the other man:—

"Blue Crag Reservoir! The dam at Blue Crag Reservoir is cracking and bulging!"

As he ran, bearing hard homeward, Jack became aware that the half-depopulated town was awaking—lights flaring up, hurrying footfalls, discordant cries. Jack's cottage stood at the opposite side of the valley from the river, just at the foot of the hills. He would gain his home, seize his two smaller children in his arms, cry out to his wife and the other children to follow, and rush up the wooded slopes. Chest distended, head back, fair hair flying, bowlless pipe-stem crushed between his teeth, bare arms playing like the arms of a trained runner in an arduous contest, Jack was advancing at a scorching pace. People in night attire, or only half-clad, began to move erratically about the pavements. Jack took to the middle of the street, keeping steadfastly on, crying at every leap:—

"The dam! The dam! The dam at Blue Crag Reservoir is bursting!"

Twenty yards from his own gate Jack became definitely conscious of a mighty, grinding noise—a volume of sound so great



"'BLUE CRAG RESERVOIR!' SHOUTED THE HORSEMAN."

his ears seemed quite unable to take it in. Coming from far up the valley, the sound was attended by a distinct, if subtle, concussion. Dimly, using all his power of vision, Jack perceived a dark line swiftly approaching. The sight brought him to an abrupt halt. He appealed to his legs—they would not move. He yearned to reach out towards his loved ones, but his arms hung leaden and lifeless.

Eyeballs fast in their sockets, tongue and vocal cords inflexible, he gasped, and gasped again, but could sense no air. The advancing line, rapidly defining itself, bore a grey, mist-like crest. The crash and roar were deafening. Everything was breaking and moving. The trees were bending and vanishing. Houses shuddered, rolled over, sank, then jumped to view again. There were glimpses of struggling, semi-nude forms, of frantic faces, of ghastly objects floating. Jack's impression was that of abject horror shrivelling him to extinction.

In this asphyxiating torpor he was helpless for a matter of seconds. Why and how he first began to move he could not tell. All he knew was that suddenly he was scaling the framework about a shade tree, pulling himself hurriedly up, clutching at the tree-trunk, mounting bough by bough in a frenzied effort to climb above the catastrophic force scouring the face of the valley. Scarcely did he catch his breath during the whole ascent. Time only to rush madly upward, wounding his bare flesh, rending his scanty apparel, unpausing till he circled and swayed amid the slender topmost branches.

Then fell the blow.

The tree bent as Jack had seen others bend. The leaves and limbs swirled and hissed. About the wildly-clinging man roared a snowy vortex. In that vivid moment Jack's eyes fell on his storey-and-a-half gable-roof cottage. He thought he saw faces—wonder-smitten faces—at the upper window, but he was not sure; it might have been a picture in his mind. His cottage behaved just as the cottages farther up the valley had behaved—shuddered, rolled over, sank, then jumped to view again. Clearly seeing it reappear, Jack saw no more; the world was rudely caught away from him.

However strange, he did not go down with a feeling of unmixed grief and horror. He and his were to die close together—keen consolation, for they always had lived close together, always had wept or smiled as one indissoluble company. Besides, fate had not been over-tender to them. Most diligent had been their labour. In ideal and in act they had been worthy. According to Jack's reasoning, they, if anybody could, had deserved that the road should grow smoother, and the sky brighten, as they toiled ahead. In reality the rocks had multiplied, and the sun had hidden his face, and the evening had found them footsore, almost without food, and ungladdened by purpose or hope for the morning.

Blue Crag Reservoir had bided its time.

Slowly, patiently, man had built it up. For years he had sported over its surface, and cleft its cool and shadowy depths. It had been beloved, not only by him who made it, but by the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. Quick to all the moods of Nature, it had mirrored the flowering bushes and the deep-leaved trees; danced under the rain-drops; broken into music at the touch of the winds; smiled with the blue, and sparkled with the blaze, of the wide-spanning sky—ever there, ever soothing, ever fair with the mask of innocence. At last, all unexpectedly, had struck the hour when the tame monster should reveal his savagery—when Blue Crag Reservoir, shattering every restraint, should make rough and tragic play with those who had erected their firesides, and cradled their progeny, and developed all the labyrinths of their puny ant-hills beneath its towering and titanic menace.

Not at all, by nature, was Jack Halsey a fatalist, fatalistic though his thoughts were when the spray-plumed crest of that wall of water bore him under. An instant only, and his negative vein had vanished. The wet chill on his hot head and body thrilled him with the resolution to live. After all, at his latest glimpse of the world, his cottage was afloat—drifting within a stone's-cast of the rising ground. Possibly Margie and the little ones were yet spared. If he were there—if he could reach the house before it was crushed, or carried down—conceivably, strong swimmer that he was, by hook or crook he could battle his way ashore with his whole family.

His whole family!

How vividly their faces stood before him!

Seeming to look into their very eyes, the vision was as the strength of lions to his wire-drawn frame!

Speeding with a rolling motion, the water tore Jack loose from his tree-top and whirled him earthward like a straw. In a moment's time he was being borne through the tree-top next below him, the leaves slapping his face, the branches striking hard against his arms and legs. Once caught, and held fast, with a vigorous effort he wrenched himself free.

Just then he was in the upward movement of the water—a movement that swept him towards the surface as rudely as the downward roll had carried him beneath it. Suddenly, before he could straighten his limbs to swim, he was hurled quite into the air, like a great bass leaping for a fly.

By now the revolving front of the flood was well ahead, and, alighting full on his breast, Jack's skilled arms kept him from again sinking. He found himself in the midst of indescribable chaos—half-submerged houses, fragments of hay and straw-ricks, deep tangles of driftwood, horrible floes of human and animal wreckage. With a continual crash and roar, masses of buildings, forced by the resistless current into vast wedges, broke like egg-shells. Through the wild din pierced an occasional soul-stricken cry. For the most part, however, Jack was impressed by the deathly silence of the people. They seemed too closely occupied to utter a sound. There were women clinging to children; there were men fighting demon-like for their wives and babies. Looking round and round, Jack felt an emotion he never had known before—a singular sense of blended wonder and triumph. Nowhere did he see an act of ignominy. Surely now, if never before, his kind was travailing through a tragedy to which the coward's infamy was unknown!

"THE LOG IMMEDIATELY ROLLED, AND AGAIN HE WAS IN THE WATER."

Jack was searching for a gable roof and green shutters and a vivid mass of clematis. That was his house. Unhappily, he could descry nothing familiar. All the old aspects were gone. The very hills looked different. Touched by a big log, Jack crawled on it. Immediately it rolled, and again he was in the water. He gained a house-top, drew himself up, and stood on the guttering. The next instant, the house crushed, he was swimming in the *débris*. Shoals of bodies were moving swiftly with the current. For a time Jack thought they were all human bodies; later he made out that many were the carcasses of cows, horses, and pigs. Struggling towards the shore, hoping to intercept his cottage, he climbed over a house-top, plunged into a stretch of open water, and struck athwart a flock of drowned sheep. Pushing the dead animals to one side, or scrambling over them, he was forging on towards the hills, when a new element suddenly manifested itself.

Had the moon streamed through a cloud-rift? Impossible, for the dark-blue heavens were still a-glitter, still without a cloud.

Furthermore, this light—this abruptly-coming light—could not be moonlight ; *it was too red !* Without looking back, Jack guessed what had happened—guessed that the water-wedged buildings on the opposite side of the valley had taken fire. All his energy he hurled into his swimming, gliding from side to side, reaching far out, pulling back fiercely, splitting the resisting flow with first one shoulder and then the other. Again and again the water broke over him, sealing his eyelids, flattening his fair hair about his long head. Not looking back, yet he could picture the spectacle ; could see women wringing their hands on the edge of the burning raft ; could see men scuttling from the blazing buildings, swimming with their women-folk, holding aloft their babies, catching, clinging, floating, fighting with desperation against the enemy before, lest they fall helpless victims to the enemy behind.

Jack experienced a profound sinking of the soul. It appeared that everybody and everything were to perish in one lurid cataclysm. Rapidly mounting, the flames reddened all the foaming, wreck-strewn waste. Jack scarcely could believe himself awake ; he seemed oppressed by the horrors of delirious sleep. It appeared to him that he was swimming, not in water, but in some fabulous ocean of lights and shadows that leapt, and rioted, and never rested. Swimming, dodging, clambering, all at once his eyes were riveted by something against the hill-side—the gable roof, the green shutters, the vivid clematis ! Men gathered about ! A woman carried ashore ! A little boy with his arms clasped about a strong man's neck ! Two men climb over the house, and, one by one, take out three little girls !

With all his skill and strength, Jack strove to make headway in that direction. But the valley was bending ; the flood was sweeping him off-shore. It was driving him full across the track of the blazing wreckage. Abandoning the battle with the current, he turned and raced with it. Race now he must, for the scattered, flowing fire was in his wake. Logs crowded, threatening to crush him. Sometimes he scrambled on them ; generally they spun, and threw him under. Nevertheless, now slowly, now rapidly, he made progress. At last he was going swiftly in free water. The valley widened, the hills vanished, the flood submerged a wide expanse ; yet Jack did not look back—simply blessed the free water, and swept ahead. All at once, after a long time—he felt he had been swimming for days—on his left appeared high ground strewn with countless blinking lights. All about him were playing blinding shafts of white radiance. He raised himself, looked back, and discerned a far, dull glow against the blackness of the upper valley.

Could it be possible ? Was it in a swimmer's power to have covered so great a distance ? Aye, the situation was unmistakable. Beyond all doubt these were the gleaming lights, this the illumined shipping, of the great city !

Along the receded river, in extended, regular formation, stood weather-beaten army-tents, sheltering the homeless. It was nearing midday, and the sun shone warm from an azure sky. Outside one of the tents, on a bale of straw, sat four children, three little girls and a little boy. They sat quietly in a row, seldom speaking, blinking in the sun.

The flaps of the tent were tied back, and the cool, sweet air blew gently in. Within the tent sat a tall man on a box. His haggard face was buried in his hands. Close beside him was a cot. On it lay an emaciated woman, thin and drawn of feature, eyes closed, occasionally sighing, and moving restlessly. By and by, opening her eyes and gazing at the man, she quickly raised herself on one arm, and looked more closely.

"Jack, is that you ?"

The man started, anxiously turned, and brushed the hair from her temples, touching her very, very lightly.

"Margie, you must lie down ; you must not talk."

"Jack, you really came through it ?"

"Oh, yes ; certainly."

"We all came through that horror alive ?"

"Yes ; all of us."

The door darkened and a bearded man came in, carrying a bag. He looked into the woman's eyes, took her temperature, and pressed his ear against her breast, the while he held her bony white wrist in his warm, brown hand. Jack's hollow eyes were fixed with an unspeakable yearning and hunger on the doctor's face. The latter had been kneeling by the cot ; he got up, and looked over his gold-rimmed glasses at Jack.

"Keep her very quiet," said he. "The crisis is past."

Jack rose unsteadily, eyes shining, and pressed the doctor's hand. Then the doctor took his bag and went away among the other tents.

"Jack, where are the children ?"

"Just outside ; they're all right. Now let us not talk."

"But go on, Jack—finish the story you were telling when—when I fell so suddenly—and—so terribly—ill."

"Later, Margie. For days and nights you have not known any of us, have not had a moment's peaceful slumber. Later, Margie."

"Did you not say that the boat which picked you up was the Press-boat of the *World Tribune?* Did you not say that Bold McEnnis himself was there, directing his men? I seem to recall your describing how you went into the cabin and wrote some thousands of words about the flood. Did you tell me these things, Jack, or are they a part of my wild and numberless imaginings?"

"BUT GO ON, JACK—FINISH THE STORY YOU WERE TELLING WHEN—WHEN I FELL SO SUDDENLY—AND—SO TERRIBLY—ILL."

"I said them all, Margie; but we must not discuss them now. Please go to sleep."

"Then, you said, too"—her eyes were abstracted now, and a curious light was kindling in them—"you said that Bold McEnnis, when he had read your story, put his arms about your neck and told you it was the most masterly piece of scenic and impressionistic painting that ever had been accomplished with words!"

Jack drew his wife's lips to his.

"Margie! My poor Margie!"

"Tell me, Jack; *what shall we do?*"

"If I tell you will you, without a further word, go to sleep?"

"I'll try."

"Then listen. We're going to live by a sweet little park, where maple trees grow and roses bloom, and we can always hear the whispering of the water. Bold McEnnis has appointed me chief descriptive writer on the *World Tribune* at a salary that makes our long years with the *Mines Mirror* seem like a troubled pauper's dream."

The woman started to speak, but checked herself, faintly smiling. A slight tremor ran through her wasted body, and she nestled her head in the pillow. Presently the man crept out and knelt before the three little girls and the little boy on the bale of straw. They raised their over-serious eyes to his.

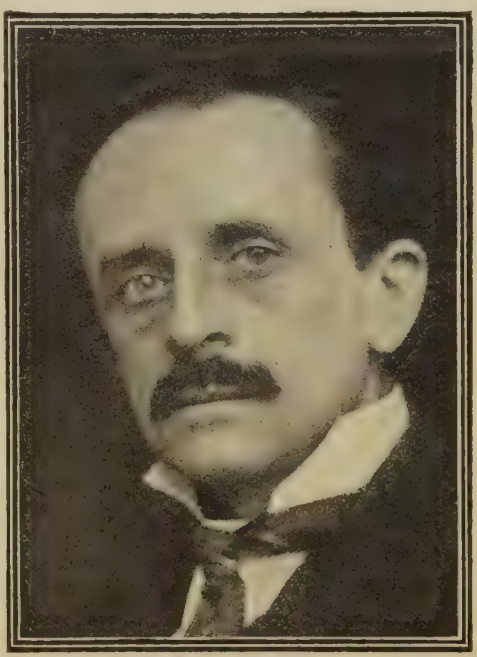
"Softly, children; mother is asleep."

Play-Writing.

By CHARLES FROHMAN.

THE ending of one of his best plays, J. M. Barrie once told me, came to him between the gate and the front-door of his house.

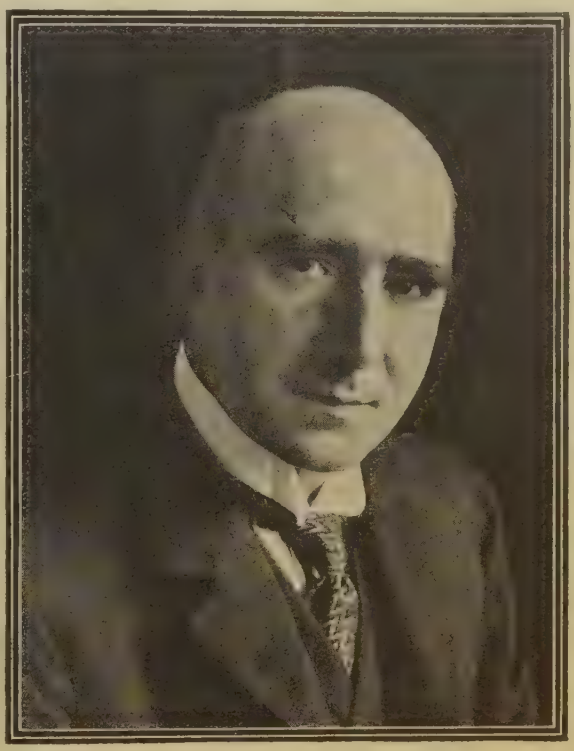
"But where did the beginning of it come to you?" I asked him. "Well, you see," was the answer, as he tilted himself up and down on his heels in front of the little fireplace, "that was the beginning as well as the ending. I thought of a strong man suddenly finding himself out, and I wrote backwards."



J. M. BARRIE.
From a Photograph by G. C. Beresford.

Building plays, not theatres, is my chief interest in life. If I had to name my ambition in a single phrase, I should say the pleasure I get from seeing able, deserving actors grow into successful stars through their own efforts in well-built plays. The terms of success in the theatre seem to me to be the co-operating abilities of playwright and actor; that is, I feel that the play is not altogether the thing; the right player in the right play is the thing. If you can find an actor that looks a part, be thankful; if you can find an actor that acts a part, be very thankful; but if you can find an actor that looks and acts a part, get down on your knees and thank God. By a well-built play I only mean a play that is true—a play that has something to say and says it well. I never care whether it is built in accordance with the laws of technical dramatic construction or not. Some great dramatic minds more often than not build their plays regardless of technique. Like Barrie, they generally start with a catastrophe, work back to its causes, allow its inevitable characters to come into being, follow these characters to their natural inception, and so arrive at the beginning after starting at the end. In those plays the skeleton is never apparent. They are generally plays of great imagination; they always possess a flexibility, a freedom of idea—and perhaps even a universality of appeal—that the play of technical construction can never have. But the play that is written from a fixed plan, that starts with a definite premise, marches towards its conclusion or conclusions inevitably; and, once you accept its premise, you must accept its conclusions. That kind of play is safeguarded against analysis or criticism; it has not the freedom of reach, the imagination of what you might call the lawlessly-built play, but it is a finished work. Great masters of dramatic writing generally build their plays along the recognized lines of play-building. Ibsen, Pinero, Jones, Maugham, Chambers, Davies, Thomas, Walter—masters of play-building—in all

their works adhere to a certain set of laws. But what is technique to one man is not technique to another man. For example, it used to be a fixed law in play-writing never to have an empty stage in the course of the dramatic action. Not in a quarter of a century, perhaps, has a play been done in New York in which the performance of an act was suddenly suspended, the stage left empty, and then the action resumed. Years ago that would have been regarded as fatal, a blunder, and immediately remedied. But in "Mid-Channel" Sir Arthur Pinero twice—and both times when the action is most tense — deliberately empties the scene of everybody. The effect is highly dramatic. A buzz of conversation is heard over the house, a sigh of relief at what has gone before and of excitement at what may follow. The device is similar to a novelist's trick (for, after all, technique is only another name for the clever manipulation of tricks) — of unexpectedly ending his chapter with a hero and heroine in straits, and with the remark that the rest of the narrative will be continued in our next.



SIR ARTHUR PINERO.

From a Photograph by E. H. Mills.

Therein Pinero, one of the greatest of living masters of dramatic technique, departed from an accepted law of dramatic writing. Mr. Walter began his consummately-built "The Easiest Way" where an ordinary dramatist would end a play. He began with the fateful climax in the lives of two persons, and worked back to an equally fateful and thoroughly inevitable climax in the lives of three, which completed the triangle. So that technique in the drama, which we may regard as a skilful succession of devices, is also something more. It is a thrifty, economic use of the material at hand. That is, a great dramatist of technical skill is simply a man who has a great human drama to tell, and tells it with the least amount of waste. Fine technical writing is close writing—there are no superfluous butlers, no dialogue that does not send the story forward, no lazy man's method of telling his plot by "asides," and no padding out of an insufficient main plot by the introduction of a weaker sub-plot. One of the best signs of the advance in modern dramatic technique is the disappearance of the sub-plot. Our authors are learning to exhaust completely their main plot without filling out the evening's entertainment by resorting to the old device of a sub-plot.

In short, technically perfect play-building, to my mind the keystone of the theatre's success, is the best way a writer knows to tell a story that is worth telling. Most writers accomplish this by abiding by the known laws of play-building—that is, in the conventional ways. Only the genius can afford to ignore the rules of his art. The only living dramatist whom I could comfortably advise to write a play without regard to the laws of play-writing is J. M. Barrie. Fancy chained to earth ceases to be fancy. It would be paralyzing to a man like Barrie to have to keep within the bounds of technical construction. But it is best for the drama as a whole and, of course, best of all for the young playwright to study construction, not for construction's sake, but as the neatest, swiftest, surest way of telling dramatically whatever he has to tell. Besides, the trend of play-writing generally and of all modern creative

work is towards systematic construction. Let me illustrate.

About twenty-five years ago, when I first got a footing in the theatrical business, there used to be several expert theatre-builders, one in particular, to whom you went and said: "I want a theatre of such-and-such a seating capacity, with a stage of such-and-such dimensions, frontage, depth," and so on. That man could instantly picture the theatre as built without any thought of a definite plan, a blue-print, or any set of drawings. In fact, he would go ahead and construct the theatre with a total disregard for any fixed plan. He was not an architect; he was a builder of theatres; and in most cases his structures were just as well done as if he had worked from a definite diagram. But now when you call for a theatre the first thing you get is a diagram, "a drawing in the flat," as the architects call it. The whole thing is worked out mathematically or geometrically, they tell me; the original plan is laid and not only never deviated from, but the structure must rise just as the plan demands. But one of the greatest architects that this country has ever known, a man who was at the same time a real artist, the junior member of a firm which has built many of our best public buildings, was a man who could never build from a blue-print. Given a definite task to do, his first mental picture was the building finished. And then he worked inwardly, just as Barrie's first idea of a play is often the ending, and then he works to the beginning. That man's buildings have a beauty and splendour, that make us proudly call them works of art, which they would probably never have had if that architect had been confined within the limits of a fixed set of plans. But it was always a matter of regret with his colleagues that they never knew what he was doing and that he could not work from a flat drawing. They could not see that he was a genius and that they were architects. In his death passed away almost the last of his kind, because the firm of which he was a member now builds only from fixed plans, only from a flat diagram which stipulates that the structure shall rise in but one way. Their works are scrupulously correct and formal; whereas his works were workably correct and beautiful. That is the difference between a genius and a great workman. I tell it only to bring out the point that none but a genius can afford to ignore the laws of his chosen art. My advice to young playwrights is always this: Learn the tools of your trade, sit among audiences and find out what the people want (in the bulk they always want the right thing), and then write it for them in as technically perfect a manner as you know how. If what the young playwright has to say is worth listening to, his play is bound to find production.

For good plays are such vital things that they produce themselves and then re-create themselves into language after language in proportion as their stories or characters have general application. The dramas of France only find a public in America when their stories and characters are just as true to America as they are to France. If more French plays find production in America or in England than English plays, the simple deduction is that the French playwrights are doing a greater amount of better work than the English or American playwrights. The best way to encourage the British or American playwright is not to protect him from the foreigner by subsidy or prizes, but to let him benefit as a finer craftsman because of the invasion of the foreigner. The greatest benefit that can befall a British or American playwright is to see his play fail in a theatre next door to a success fresh from the Paris stage—and not only to see it, but to see why. The very popularity of such a play proves that there is something in it, either in form or in idea, that the native play should contain.

In what you might call the domestic drama the French have excelled in the last quarter of a century because their playwrights—Bernstein, Maurice Leblanc, Gaston Arman de Caillavet, Robert de Flers, and others—have shown superior power in the four chief processes of play-writing: observation—the knack of seizing upon characteristic traits and recognizing their dramatic significance; selection—narrowing down these details to what is most representative; exposition—the swift, clear laying of the groundwork of the play; and development—the fulfilment of that exposition by letting the characters logically and humanly live out the traits assumed for them in the exposition. The typical French domestic drama is fascinating from the point of view of workmanship. Its chief virtue is economy. It sounds great depths by the masterly manipulation of few characters. Young playwrights often think that a good play must, therefore, have only few characters. They think that they are good plays because they have few characters, when the real fact is that they have few characters because they are good plays. The influence of the concise, compactly-built

domestic drama of France can be seen on all sides in England and America. We are more and more coming to have plays that have few characters because they are good—that is, compactly built and concisely thought-out plays. Naturally, the French stage sends more to England and America than they send to France. But a season ago the two most popular plays on the French stage were "Sherlock Holmes" and "Raffles," neither of them the product of French play-wrights.

One respect in which French, or any kind of European-made play, will always remain inferior to a rightly-written American play is due to the chief virtue of the foreign-made play when on its own soil. The very technical perfection of a play written for an older civilization, which is pretty sure to be a thinking public, robs it of the warmth and humanness that will secure it an appeal before a younger civilization, which is pretty sure to be a feeling public. A well-built American play touches the mind through the heart. The perfect French or European play touches the heart through the mind. They think about life in Europe; we feel it in America—just as an old man reflects upon life, while a youth lives it. The wise American playwright is the one who takes the dramatic material that is true to American life and clothes it with as much of France's or Europe's excellence in technique as will not rob that material of one iota of its strength. Technical excellence of French play-writing, combined with the great emotional or optimistic strength in American play-writing, would seem to be a perfect product. The more French plays, even in translation, that America sees, the more rapidly we shall attain such a product.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.
From a Photograph by Russell & Sons.

The difference between playgoing in London or New York and playgoing in Paris is this: In the former cities you have to fight to get a ticket for a popular play, but once it is yours the way into the theatre is an easy and pleasant one. In Paris it is easy enough to buy a ticket, but then it becomes a fight to get into the theatre. The theatres of Paris are controlled by the Society of French Authors and by the women of Paris. As I am myself a member of the Society of French Authors, perhaps I may be allowed to speak of it with a little more freedom than would be courteous in the case of a complete outsider.

The position of the authors in Paris is a remarkable one. No manager can produce a play not written by a member of the Society of French Authors. Should he do so, he cannot have any of the works of the other two hundred members of the society. In order to produce the American or English plays I have done in Paris, like "Sherlock Holmes" and "Peter Pan," I had to become a member of the Society of French Authors; and, although the authors understood that this meant opening up an avenue for the introduction of foreign plays, the election was made without feeling and with great friendliness. The author of every successfully-produced French play becomes a member of the Society of French Authors. In accordance with the rules of the society, each author is entitled to a number of tickets for every play performed in Paris. If the play is successful, of course these seats are sold by the authors to street speculators. In many cases hungry authors have been known to take their places in front of the theatres and themselves sell seats for the performance of their fellow-author's play.

It is only after the playgoer has successfully passed through the mob of author-speculators—or their representatives in the street—and has emerged from an examina-

tion as severe as our Customs, perpetrated by many representatives of many interests, each ambitious to secure a piece of his ticket, that the playgoer reaches the corridor of the theatre, where his real troubles begin. There he is faced by a phalanx of French Amazons—the female ushers—who are the widows of those who have fought for their country, and who themselves now stand in line ready to fight the audience to a finish, securing hats, coats, gloves, and canes. These Amazonian creatures are for the most part Government *pensionnaires*. In some cases they are the widows of veterans or *vivandiers* of France's last war. They are as plentiful in any French theatre as flies at the spigot of a molasses barrel. As the playgoer enters the theatre he is not charged all at once by this throng of women, but he is smilingly greeted by one who would have him take a programme for a tip, and then, but only till then, lets him pass on. A few paces farther on there is another smile and another woman, who would relieve the playgoer of his hat and of another tip, and again lets him pass on. But he does not get much farther into the theatre before he is again encountered by another squarely-built, determined-looking Government appointee, who would not for the world think of letting monsieur's evening's entertainment be spoiled by the burden of his evening gloves. He must let her have them (and a tip) before he is allowed to resume his intermittent journey towards his evening's entertainment. Relieved of every visible object, if not of every visible means of support—stripped of everything that can be checked—the playgoer meets the last of this theatre bodyguard and is himself checked (for a franc) into a more or less comfortable seat.

As time goes on and moneyed Britishers and Americans become more plentiful, greater ingenuity seems to be expended upon the problem—"What shall we check next?" Perhaps the native Parisian playgoer slides by unnoticed. But with each going to Paris the native American cannot but wonder that if he lives long enough and the weather is suitable, will it not end by his checking the rest of his raiment before he sees anything of the play? It ought to be added, by the way, that there is a sense of thoroughness in the industry of these hat, coat, glove, and cane women that makes it impossible even for a magician to escape them. After the play has begun they apportion off the house among them and carefully police it to make certain that no one is enjoying the play still accompanied by a hat, a glove, or a cane. If such is found, he is immediately tapped on the shoulder and relieved of whatever article he happens to have with him (and a tip).

When "Peter Pan" was first played in Paris I induced J. M. Barrie to see his play acted before the French. When Mr. Barrie entered his box he was obliged, in accordance with the custom of the country, to yield a franc as a tip to the female usher, and another franc tip to the female who gave him a programme. Mr. Barrie's extreme shyness is in direct ratio to his fame. He disliked sitting in the box during the whole performance, choosing rather to go out at every available opportunity and hide himself in some obscure corner of the building. But each time he re-entered his box he was greeted as a stranger by the omnipresent female usher and programme lady. The one was just as determined to show Mr. Barrie to his box again as the other was that he should not enter it without a programme. And it made just as little difference to the one that the author knew where his box was as it did to the other that he did not need the programme. Hence for each exit and entrance of his box Mr. Barrie paid dearly in francs. In fairness to the managers of the Paris theatres, it ought to be said that they would like exceedingly to do away with this nuisance; but they are powerless in the face of the traditionally-imposed governmental control and apparently never-diminishing supply of the widows of veterans—though France has not had a war since the 'seventies.

All authors get the same fee for playwriting in the French theatre. Henri Bernstein's fees in Paris are the same for "Israel" and "Samson" as those of an obscure author. It is a great handicap to success in Paris that the city demands ten per cent. of the gross receipts of every performance. In fact, the theatre, the management of the company, the author, the Society of Authors, the city of Paris, and sometimes even other interests, each have a representative in the box-office when the evening's receipts are counted up. The occasion has all the formality, interest, and excitement worthy of the transfer of a huge loan from one Government to another. This crowd in the box-office of a Paris theatre during the financial interment is, however, very useful in the absence of an actual audience. The long-suffering English or American dramatist—lacking since his inception encouragement, subsidy, anything, if we are to believe him—has his position to contrast with that of the French playwright, upon whom there is levied a multitude of demands. The

French playwright only gets his share of the gross receipts when all these interests are satisfied. As a matter of fact, there are so many demands upon the earnings of a play, even when it is successful, in a French theatre that it is with difficulty that a good play can enjoy a long run—and even if it does, the longer the run the greater the financial sufferings of the author.

My election to the Society of Authors accords me the privilege of looking over the lists of plays which are scheduled for production at the various theatres. The system of bringing out plays in the theatres of Paris is entirely different from that in vogue in America or in England. When a manager of a theatre arranges for the production of a number of plays at his theatre during the season, he gives the author what is called a "blue billet," or card. When once given an author, it establishes his position in that theatre for the production of his play during the season. Should the manager not produce the play, he is liable for a heavy forfeit. The billets are given by numbers, the manager naturally distributing them in accordance with his preference for the plays that he accepts. Should one of these plays meet with a great success, all the other authors billeted at the theatre are necessarily put off. By a rule of the Authors' Society they are entitled to their play and a financial return. If a fresh billet is issued, the play goes back to the management and new numbers are distributed.

New York, London, Paris, and Berlin—they seem more and more like so many market-places for plays in adjacent States to a manager travelling to and fro. Boundaries, whether of oceans or channels, mean less and less as a man searches for good plays. To walk down the pier of one of the great steamship lines in New York after a six months' residence in Europe brings no especial sensation of home-coming—only an added zest to the day's work. Plays, players, and playwrights—what would life be without them? Could a man wish for more fascinating companions?

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM.
From a Photograph by R. Haines.

A House-Warming.

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

Illustrated by C. H. Taffs.

WHEN everything in the house in Bedford Square was arranged to his satisfaction, Tregenna sent out invitations for a house-warming. He had lived so long in rooms furnished by other persons—rooms detested because they were filled with objects which offended a particular taste—that the sense of being really at home filled him with an enthusiasm which he might have pronounced boyish in another man of his own age. He was thirty-five, the only son of a Cornish squire, and had begun his career as a briefless barrister with a modest allowance. Later he drifted into journalism, becoming in due time reviewer of novels, dramatic critic, and ultimately assistant editor of a literary magazine. Six months before the house-warming his father had died, leaving to Tregenna an ancient manor-house filled with beautiful furniture, and an income sufficient to gratify ambitions reasonably modest.

We behold him smiling at the result of his labours and confident of the approval of many friends. Conviction in this regard was fortified by the verdict of a second cousin who had helped to cheer his father's declining years—little Alba Pentreath, known more familiarly as Alba Longa, because she was so alluringly diminutive.

"It's exactly right," said Alba Longa.

"You think that Marion will be pleased?"

"My dear! She—*must*."

Marion Deloraine was an actress, a Rising Star, now absent "on tour." Between her and Tregenna existed an understanding. Troth had not been plighted, but Tregenna was aware that the young lady was willing to become mistress of a house in London. No one could expect a Rising Star to set for ever in a West-country village. For dear Marion's sake Tregenna had stripped his ancient manor. She had signed a contract for an engagement in London, and without a word said on either side it was agreed that the "profesh"—if Marion married—would not be robbed of her services.

"I wonder," continued Alba, with slight hesitation, "whether Miss Deloraine will remark any change in you, Harry?"

"What sort of change?"

She laughed.

"You are part of your lovely things. They are part of you. They illustrate you. In your old flat you looked like an old master in the wrong frame."

"You're a sympathetic midget, and you know me pretty well. I can admit to you that I feel something of a beast."

"A beast! Why?"

"Stripping and forsaking the old manor."

"We all know why you did it."

"Um! Yes."

"You would like to live in Cornwall, Harry?"

He nodded, rather despondently. She said, hurriedly:—

"What you have done is a magnificent tribute." After a pause, she added, hesitatingly: "I hope Miss Deloraine doesn't mind another woman helping you."

"Marion is very modern about that sort of thing. She knows that you are a kind of sister. I say—what are you going to wear at my house-warming?"

"Something in keeping with this delightful room."

"Trust you for that. But tell me about your frock."

"No, no; that's a secret."

He looked at her attentively. Long ago he had described her to Marion as a "jolly little roundy." Compared with the Rising Star, she shone with subdued twinklings. A smart young journalist, to whom Alba had listened with attention, remarked carelessly: "Standard bread, that little cousin of yours."

Tregenna said, warmly: "I'm awfully glad

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my father left you three hundred pounds a year, but it rather astonishes me that you, too, should have cut the dear old—Duchy."

She smiled.

Tregenna accounted easily for her silence. An aunt, Lady Pentreath, an abominably selfish old woman? He began to plot and plan for her escape. Pity for others was his distinguishing quality, stigmatized by some as weakness. Once he had been sorry for Marion. He had plotted and planned for her, written her up, praised her to managers,

"'IT'S EXACTLY RIGHT,' SAID ALBA LONGA."

selfish old woman, who lived in a prim, dull house in Eaton Place, wanted an unpaid companion.

She went back to the dreary house in Eaton Place. And Tregenna became oddly sensible that his thoughts accompanied her. Why should Alba be bound to the caprices of a rolled logs. Certainly she had been very grateful. After his father's death he had suddenly realized that she was something more than grateful.

Obviously, little Alba might marry. That was her manifest destiny. But Tregenna felt sure that he would dislike her husband. He

hoped she would not be captured by a London man. The right sort would be a country squire, keen about his own property, and not entirely engrossed by hunting and shooting and golf.

He did not see her again till the day of the house-warming. He had asked friends to luncheon upon the morning after Marion's return from the provincial tour, expecting the Rising Star to come alone and early, so that together they might skim the cream of a great occasion; but she had telephoned that a hat specially ordered would not be delivered till one.

His house was a Georgian mansion of fine proportions. The double drawing-room upon the first floor held the best things. The decorator and Tregenna, as a committee of two, selected certain pictures and prints and furniture, and prepared for them a suitable setting. The result more than justified expectation. As the decorator remarked, "The eighteenth century at its best!"

Marion was inordinately fond of flowers, particularly those of vivid colouring. Accordingly Tregenna had ordered an immense quantity; but at half-past nine, when they were delivered by the florist, he came to the conclusion that they were out of place in the drawing-room. He placed the finest roses in a large Oriental bowl and scattered the other plants in the hall and dining-room. And then, at the last moment, he decided that masses of palms and azaleas detracted from the austere distinction of his hall, and bundled the lot into the basement. A friend arrived immediately afterwards, a singer in musical comedy, Mr. Guillaume Boileau, born William Drinkwater. To him Tregenna said, with an air of satisfaction:—

"I've just cleared out the confounded vegetables."

With a wave of his hand he indicated his servant, who was disappearing with the last of the palms. Boileau adjusted an eyeglass, and surveyed his host with astonishment.

"What's wrong with 'em?"

"They're somehow not in the picture."

"I like palms," said Boileau. "They always remind me of the big restaurants."

"Just so," Tregenna remarked, dryly.

As they mounted the stairs Tregenna had a vision of Boileau's flat, the last word in modern luxury and comfort. Boileau, when entering the drawing-room, nearly came to grief upon the well-waxed parquet.

"Hang these thin mats!" he exclaimed.

The mats were Persian, of the finest quality. Tregenna winced.

"Take my tip and buy a velvet pile carpet," said Boileau. Then he added, staring about him: "I suppose this is O.K.—right period and all that; but, frankly, my dear boy, it seems a bit too faded for my taste. Of course you dug it up out of your old manor-house?"

"Yes."

"Daresay it did well enough down there. I'm not hurting your feelings, old man, am I?"

"Not at all," replied Tregenna, stiffly.

They descended to the dining-room, where the famous singer slaked a thirst which he

"HE CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THEY WERE OUT OF PLACE IN THE DRAWING-ROOM."

pronounced an asset. Let it not be assumed for a moment that Boileau was intemperate. He was fond of boasting that he took care of himself, knowing well that he was regarded by an ever-increasing public as a precious national possession. As he drank his whisky-and-soda he asked, abruptly :—

" What does Marion say to all this ? "

" She hasn't seen anything yet."

Boileau grinned. " She'll be surprised," he affirmed.

Outside a motor was drawing up at the front door.

" Another early bird," said Boileau, looking out of window. " It's Tommy Breitheimer."

Tommy was famous as an art-dealer. He bustled in, a short, keen-faced man, with the indefinable air of the appraiser.

" Wanted to see your stuff, Harry," said he.

" Delighted to show it to—you."

The accent on the pronoun was not wasted upon Boileau.

" I'll smoke a cigarette in the hall," he said, pleasantly. " The ashes will kill some of the moths in your old mats."

Tregenna went upstairs with Breitheimer, whose eyes were sparkling. He presented the appearance of a lively terrier who smells rabbits. Tregenna heaved a sigh of satisfaction, for he perceived that Tommy was indeed surprised—in the right way. He darted about, caressing chairs and tables, gloating over the best bits, wagging his tail with delight, and barking out :—

" It's fine—fine No rubbish ! "

" Thank you," said Tregenna, " I know what that means coming from you, Tommy."

" I'd take the lot off your hands now. Could I say more ? "

Under the particular circumstances he might have said less ; but Tregenna could make due allowance for a professional.

Other guests began to arrive, some of them arrayed in the extreme of fashion. One young lady, a friend of Miss Marion Deloraine, wore a hat that must have weighed what it cost—nearly ten pounds— and a frock which might have been sent by letter-post for a penny. Alba Longa came with Lady Pentreath, who was also of kin to Tregenna. She surveyed the furniture and the people through long-handled tortoiseshell glasses, remarking, acidly :—

" Candidly, my dear Henry, I prefer your room to your company."

Harry whispered to Alba : " I like your frock immensely."

It struck him, almost with violence, that she was the real right thing. And, as Alba was carried off by the genial Boileau, he said as much to Lady Pentreath, who sniffed.

" Your father always hoped you would think so, Henry."

" Eh ? "

" You must know that she was selected as ' the real right thing ' by him for you."

" Never had a notion of it," declared Harry, in a depressed tone.

As he spoke Marion entered.

She took the stage instantly. Tregenna advanced to meet her, trying to interpret the expression upon her handsome face, which wore a picture-postcard smile. As soon as he had murmured his greetings she was acclaimed by Boileau and half-a-dozen men, who formed a circle round her. Alba Longa's aunt sniffed once more, as fragments of chaff floated to her ears. Everybody seemed to be upon the most extraordinary terms of intimacy. Boileau was heard to exclaim in his melodious tones :—

" Well, old dear, I'm told you knocked 'em in the provinces ! "

Marion's voice, clear also and melodious, replied, swiftly :—

" Manchester is mine, and Liverpool ! "

Chattering and laughing the company went in to luncheon.

During luncheon champagne was drunk. Tregenna knew that this was expected at a house-warming. In the same hospitable spirit he had provided a bill of fare which would have served admirably for a dinner. He had invited his friends to eat and drink and make merry. And they responded nobly to the invitation.

And yet he felt out of it, a stranger at his own feast. Marion was on one side of him ; on the other, rigidly upright, sat Lady Pentreath, disapproval of her company exuding from every pore. Tommy Breitheimer engrossed the attention of Marion, and poor Tregenna, attempting sprightly conversation with Alba Longa's aunt, could overhear Tommy pricing his possessions.

" I give you my word that ten thou is locked up in the drawing-room. Probably more. And the pictures in this room——"

Tregenna stared at the family portraits, which included a small Gainsborough and a Raeburn. His ancestors seemed to be smiling derisively at a degenerate descendant, as the corks popped intermittently. It was a hot day, and his guests were certainly thirsty. Judged by the noise and laughter the luncheon was undoubtedly a success. Presently, Mr. Guillaume Boileau, who liked to hear himself speak quite as much as the world liked to hear

"TREGENNA ADVANCED TO MEET HER."

him sing, rose to his feet, and proposed in a few happily-chosen words the health of the host.

"We have known old Harry," he said, "for many years. We hail him as one of the best."

"Hear, hear!"

"I am not tooting my own horn," continued the singer, "when I congratulate him upon his friends. If a man is to be interpreted by his choice of friends, why then our dear old Harry is a sort of composite photograph of men and women distinguished in every walk of life."

"Hear, hear!"

Tregenna smiled deprecatingly. Boileau

had made what the "profesh" would call a "hit." Listening to Boileau, Tregenna thought whimsically that always he had reflected—more or less faithfully—the opinions of others rather than his own, an abnegation rare in critics. He had tried, sincerely enough, to interpret his friends, and to-day he was being interpreted by them!

Boileau continued fluently:—

"Our host has come into his kingdom, and this is his coronation. We all hope," the speaker glanced slyly at the Rising Star, "that we may soon be called upon to assist at an even more interesting domestic ceremony. I give you Mr. Henry Tregenna, with musical honours."

Harry's health was drunk enthusiastically, to the accompaniment of "He's a jolly good fellow." He responded briefly:—

"Mr. Boileau is much too flattering; but it is true that in my contributions—some of them unpaid—to current literature I have tried to represent others rather than my unworthy self; but I do not wish it to be inferred that I am a mere composite photograph. I admire the white spats of Mr. Boileau's blameless life, but I shall never wear them myself. I have attempted to stand upright in the shoes of Socialists and even Post-Impressionists, but at heart I'm a Tory and a lover of Old Masters. It is a great pleasure to entertain you in my own house, amongst my own things."

He sat down abruptly, to meet the brilliant eyes of Marion and to hear her whisper:—

"You are a man of surprises."

Coffee and cigars were served in the dining-room; and Alba Longa and her aunt were the first to go. The others followed, leaving Tregenna alone with the Rising Star. She was perfectly composed; he was desperately nervous. They went into the drawing-room, where Marion lighted a cigarette. Then she said, lightly:—

"Your things are beautiful."

"I am glad you think so."

"Tommy," she continued, "raves about them; but, my dear Harry, are they suitable?"

"Suitable?"

"Your income is about two thousand a year."

"Yes."

"And, apparently, another thousand a year, or more, is sunk in pictures and furniture. Is that common sense?"

"Call it—sentiment."

"I never accused you of that."

"Between ourselves, Marion, I am a man of sentiment. I have thought of you as a woman of sentiment. You play sentimental parts with sincerity and conviction."

"That is my *métier*."

"Then at heart you are——"

"Intensely practical. Well, everything went off admirably."

He nodded, and then asked, with irrelevance:—

"I say, Marion, what scent are you using?"

"*Peau de Phryné*. It's distinctive, isn't it?"

"Very. One can't smell the roses."

"I won't shock you by saying what it costs. By the way, haven't you rather pinched over the flowers?"

"The basement is full of them."

"But why?"

"They made the hall look like the entrance to a smart restaurant."

Marion frowned, for she, too, loved smart restaurants. Also it had just occurred to her that another woman might have influenced her own man.

"Your cousin helped you, Harry?"

"Dear little soul! Yes."

"She looks rather old-fashioned. The aunt was appalling—a gorgon. I thought such monsters were extinct."

"Lady Pentreath is my first cousin once removed," said Harry, stiffly.

"The fact that she is removed saves the situation."

She smiled, sensible that Harry was curiously irritable and ill at ease. Obviously he wanted a lead.

"My London engagement is definitely settled," she remarked. "The rehearsals will begin at once. I am wondering whether I ought to take a flat or stop at my hotel. Housekeeping is rather a bore."

She was so sure of him that she spoke out plainly. It happened that she was sitting in the chair habitually used by his mother, long ago dead. Unconsciously she had adopted a pose which displayed to advantage the fine lines of a figure showing distinctly through a thin gown. In just such an attitude she listened to the love-making of the leading men who acted with her.

"What do you advise?" she cooed.

In desperation he stuttered: "S-s-stick to the hotel!"

As he spoke he knew that he was inspired. She belonged to hotels, not to homes. And he—Heaven help him!—had never known it till he saw her in his mother's chair, surrounded by the things which his mother had loved and which this woman wanted to sell.

He perceived also that she was determined to marry him. And it would be his privilege to attend to the housekeeping! The nursery also—if a nursery should come into being—would be his department!

He heard her voice, with its gracefully modulated inflections, saying, protestingly:—

"My dear man, I can't live in an hotel for ever!"

He laughed recklessly.

"Why not?"

Utterly devoid of a sense of humour, she said, petulantly:—

"Are you making fun of me? Why do you laugh? Where is the joke?"

"On me," he hastened to say, with a more chastened expression. Swiftly he continued, "You have asked for my advice. If you think housekeeping is a bore you will be wise not to attempt it. I thought—you—er—gave me to understand a short time ago that you wanted a home of your own. Your enthusiasm infected me. But I dare say you're right."

"I should love a home like this," she murmured, softly.

With a clearness of vision that astounded him he saw that she was acting. In self-defence he must act also, fighting for salvation with her weapons. He said, tentatively:—

"But you think it would be more *practical* to sell the most valuable things?"

"With a tenth of the money that hangs upon your walls I could make this house ten times as cosy."

"You are telling me exactly what I wanted to know."

Much encouraged, Marion went on, smilingly:—

"Supposing that this house, as it stands, were mine, I should realize at first glance that it was the wrong setting for me."

"Yes, yes."

"These old-fashioned things belong to an old-fashioned house."

"This is an old-fashioned house—an Adam's house."

"I should have said that these things ought to belong to old-fashioned people. And you are so modern."

"Am I?"

"Aren't you?"

"Perhaps"—he hesitated, flushing slightly—"I have pretended to be modern, so as to be in touch with the popular demand. I used to be rather an authority on mediæval plate, but my editors were not interested in that."

"All your friends are up-to-date."

"Quite true. In my line, fivepence a line, they had to be. But now——"

"Please go on!"

"From what Boileau said to-day at luncheon I am beginning to fear that I got my friends on false pretences. In fine, this"—he waved his hand—"is my setting, although, unhappily, it is not *yours*."

Marion was a clever woman. It would be too much to affirm that she knew she was defeated, but she felt that time alone could adjust certain differences. If she wished to advance, she must retire—as gracefully as possible.

"Dear Harry!" she said. "You are over-tired. I will run away. I am rather fagged myself."

She pressed his hand reassuringly. And she smiled as a taxi carried her swiftly to her hotel. Harry rang the bell and said to his servant:—

"Open all the windows in the drawing-room."

"Very good, sir."

"Prop open the door, too. If I had my way, no scent should be used except eau-de-Cologne."

"Yes, sir."

Harry went to his bedroom and gazed at a flushed face, which he hardly recognized.

"What an escape!" he muttered.

He drank tea alone in a thoroughly ventilated apartment. Before he had finished it Alba Longa entered the room.

"Aunt Anastasia left her fan here. I came back for it, because she is so pernickety. Hearing you were alone, I—I thought I'd just run up to—to——"

"To have a cup of tea with me? How kind of you!"

"No"—she blushed—"to congratulate you. I thought it would be nice to be the first."

"I accept your congratulations."

She tried to read the peculiar writing on his pleasant face as she asked:—

"Is everything settled?"

"I am," said Harry, with a short laugh. "By Jove, Alba Longa, I'm the luckiest fellow in the kingdom!"

She winced as she answered, valiantly: "Marion is lucky too."

"She is. But she doesn't know her luck—yet. Sit down!"

Alba did so, utterly bewildered, murmuring: "You look so odd, Harry."

"I feel odd. I've had a squeak for it, and I'm rather jumpy. I thought my house-

"ALBA LONGA ENTERED THE ROOM."

warming was a failure, but it's been a colossal success. Does this room smell quite sweet ?"

"Yes, Harry. What has happened ?"

"I've escaped a lingering death, that's all."

"A lingering—death ?"

"I might have married Marion. By the way, never be beguiled into using *Peau de Phryné* scent."

"You are not going to marry Marion ?"

"Thank the Lord, I am not."

"But, Harry—why not ?"

"Because I don't love her, and because I do love somebody else."

"Somebody else ?"

She stared at him in stupefaction, but soft blushes deepened upon her cheeks.

"I've been a blind fool, dear. Five years ago I ought to have discovered what I know now. There is only one woman in the wide world for me, and her name is not Marion Deloraine. I shall sell the lease of this house, and return with my things to Cornwall."

She whispered, nervously: "Does this other woman care for you ?"

"As a friend—yes."

"Who is she, Harry ?"

"Her name is Alba Pentreath. I'll tell you in strictest confidence that I'm going to begin again with her."

"Because she goes with the furniture ?"

"Oh, hang the furniture ! I could live in Upper Tooting with her."

"Are you sure ?"

"Absolutely."

"Then I'll tell you something—in strictest confidence. Miss Alba Pentreath is head over ears in love already."

"Heaven and earth ! Some Cornishman ?"

"Yes."

Tregenna smiled dismally.

"I'm glad he's a Cornishman. Do I know him ?"

"You are just beginning to know **him.** His name is Henry Tregenna."

From a Photo. by] "MIXED BATHING." *[Henry Irving.*

The Polar Sea, London, N.W.

THIS is the new postal address—or it should be—of Sam and Barbara, Polar bears of great popularity and distinction. For great changes have come to pass of late at the Zoological Gardens of Regent's Park, and among all the creatures which have been promoted to more convenient quarters none has been more highly considered or more spaciously accommodated than Sam and Barbara.

In the old time the Polar bear's quarters were scarcely half-quarters; at any rate, a very vulgar fraction of the elegant private ocean now at the disposal of Sam and Barbara. And a Polar bear is no suitable tenant for a small den and a large puddle; he is long and high and thick, and he bumps his ends and his sides, and he butts the puddle-bed

From a Photo. by] "BARBARA WILL TAKE THE LOG BETWEEN HER PAWS,

with his nose when he dives. These misfortunes, often repeated and long-continued, sour the Polar bear's temper and cause quarrels with his wife; and it is a notorious fact that all Sam's deficiencies as a husband are traceable to overcrowding in his youth. For if you are a Polar bear with any sense of personal dignity it annoys you to find yourself unable to take three steps of a stroll without stumbling over your wife; so you learn to obviate the inconvenience by presenting her with a clump on the side of the head whenever you find her within reach; this has the double advantage of clearing her out of the way at the moment, and of reminding her not to be stumbled over in future.

The present Sam is the last of a long succession of Sams, of whom one of the most celebrated was not a Sam but a Samson, who reigned for a very large part of thirty years. The Sam now in power was but six months old when he first arrived at Regent's Park, and that was eight years ago. He came from such a cribbed and cabined confinement on board ship that even the ancient half-quarters of the Zoo were something like liberty by comparison; and in those half-quarters the sooty young ragamuffin of 1903 grew into the giant whom Barbara now respects as lord.

Barbara herself is a year younger than her husband, with just that year's less experience of England, home, as represented by the half-quarters, and beauty in the shape of Sam. Barbara has less of dignity and more of playfulness than Sam; even a Polar bear's dignity will not wholly survive seven years of persistent knocking into a pond at the paw of so large a spouse as Sam. But Barbara's playfulness has survived everything, and she will rollick in the new Polar sea for hours together, till at last her example becomes infectious, and even the morose Sam so far relaxes as to flounder in after her and gambol with all the lightness and vivacity of a delirious elephant. In the elegant refinements of practical hilarity Barbara is her husband's superior. There is a log of wood, much reduced by wear and gnawing, which

ROLL OVER ON HER BACK, AND SO SWIM WITH IT." [Henry Irving

"SHE WILL HEAVE HERSELF UP WITH A MIGHTY EFFORT HALF-LENGTH OUT OF THE WATER, HURLING THE LOG OVERHEAD."
From a Photo. by Henry Irving.

is her chief plaything, and she has invented, acquired, and perfected many accomplishments of which this is the instrument. She will catch it in the water and throw it dexterously in many ways. She will take the log between her paws, roll over on her back in the water, and so swim with it pressed against her muzzle, gnawing it affectionately. She will lodge it accurately on the rocks that emerge from the private ocean, she will scramble up after it, knock it off and fling herself on it as it falls, with all the playfulness and elegance of a kitten weighing about two tons. She will dive after it and emerge with it balanced on the tip of her nose, fully understanding and delighting in the applause of the spectators. She will heave herself up with a mighty effort half-length out of the water, hurling the log overhead, as you see her doing in the photograph, with water and spray streaming about her. But chiefly she loves to inveigle the keeper to play with her—from the other side of the bars, it must be under-

"SHE CLAPS IT AGAINST HER CHEEK IN THE MANNER OF A TOOTHACHE REMEDY."
From a Photo. by Henry Irving.

stood. The keeper's business is to fling the log into the water again and again—as often as Barbara can persuade him. Then Barbara, after a trot along the coast to the nearest point opposite the log, bundles in headlong and retrieves the log as a dog fetches a stick, except that her method of carrying it is peculiar to herself. She claps it against her cheek in the manner of a toothache remedy, holding it in place with her left paw and swimming with the remaining three. Gaining the shore she climbs out, still hugging the log against her face, and so proceeds to erect her full height against the bars. Standing so, on her hind legs, she presents a fine figure of an upstanding bear, for it is her ambition, for some impenetrable reason, to return the log through the rails at the highest elevation she can possibly reach. This she does so that it falls at the keeper's feet; whereupon that patient official is expected to pitch it back again and wait for its return once more—twice more, three times, thirty times—three hundred times if he will; though he won't; for his endurance is merely human, and he has other duties.

All this is very entertaining, but in truth Barbara is a vain creature, and she derives quite as much pleasure from the notice of the spectators as from the enjoyment of her sport. In one of the photographs we reproduce she is caught positively in the act of "showing off," pitching up the log with an eye—both eyes, in fact—on the crowd, instead of on the log, where any single-minded and scientific bear would keep it. This, to confess the truth, is a habit of Barbara's, and, being a failing that she shares with certain human creatures

—even Cabinet Ministers—it establishes a sort of sympathy that leads many onlookers to esteem her a possible delightful pet, with no possible drawback except a certain bulk that might cause inconvenience in a crowded drawing-room. But, alas, her keeper will tell you that Barbara is not only vain, but sly and treacherous to so extreme a degree that, in fact, she is a far more dangerous brute than the surly Sam himself, who tyrannizes over her. There is no humbug about Sam. He is in captivity and he objects to it; he is also less to practise deceit or lay a trap. So, since she has not yet incurred the guilt of homicide, visitors may well remember to express any sympathy they may feel for Barbara at a safe distance from the bars, for Barbara's sake; it may, indeed, occur to some to do it for their own. And at the same time it would not seem altogether advisable to presume on the indifference of Sam.

As for him, although he would

From a Photo. by] "WITH AN EYE ON THE CROWD." *[Henry Irving*

on occasion—less now than formerly—a wife-beater; but he makes no pretence at delight with the human creatures that stare at him, and though he would quite readily—spite of something of the appearance of a Brobdingnagian sheep—flatten one with a blow of his steam-hammer paw, he would not condescend to go out of his way to do it, still seem to devote much time to morose self-communing, he has his rollick on occasion, and when he *does* flounder in for a game of mixed bathing with Barbara then the spray flies as in a storm, and mighty whacks are dealt apace, as Tennyson, or somebody else, didn't say. Nothing like it is ever seen at the National Sporting Club.

Oxo the Slave.

The North Close Boys Meet with a Novel Specimen of Human Being.

By MAX RITTENBERG.

Illustrated by H. M. Brock, R.I.

NOVI! And such a novi!" said Haines, gleefully, in open prep.-room.

"All novis are either little worms or little pigs," remarked Tomlinson.

"This one's neither. I've never seen such a perfect specimen of the country bumpkin."

Pondersby pricked up his ears, as the saying goes. Viewed from his special outlook on his fellow schoolboys, this might mean an opportunity for sport. Pondersby's idea of "sport" was not to go and kill something, but to go and make somebody highly uncomfortable.

"Where is our little friend?" said Pondersby, blandly.

"In the reading-room."

"We will investigate," quoth Pondersby.

A "novi" in mid-term was an unusual phenomenon. A humanitarian rule requires the new boys to assemble at North Close a day or two before the rest of the house at the beginning of term. This allows them to get to know their bearings in house and school, saves them from the humiliation of having to ask their way about from other boys only too anxious to mislead them, and gives them the opportunity of banding together informally in defensive alliance against the habitués. The preliminary day or so before the real opening of school is a very precious privilege for the novi.

But this one had the misfortune to arrive at mid-term. They found him in the reading-room, sitting at the big centre table and turning over the leaves of a bound volume of *Punch* with the utmost stolidity. He was all that Haines had painted him—an uncouth, bovine lump of about fifteen years, quite excellent material for Pondersby's special talents.

They seated themselves on the table around him, half-a-dozen of them, winking delightedly at one another.

Haines opened the proceedings. "What's oo's ickle name?" said he, sweetly.

The new boy looked up slowly and ejaculated uncouthly: "What?"

"I have the honour to request you to communicate to us your bally name."

"Oosh," replied the new boy, this being the proper South African pronunciation of his name.

"Don't be rude."

"Man, but I am not being rude. That is my name."

"Spell it."

"O-C-H-S-E."

"Jee—rusalem! But that's pronounced 'Oxo.'"

"No."

"*I* say it is."

"It does not want to be pronounced 'Oxo.'"

"It doesn't want to! Why not?"

"No," answered the Afrikander, obstinately.

Pondersby took a hand in the game. "What does your dear mammy call her darling?"

"Yoppy."

"Spell it."

"J-A-C-O-B-U-S."

"Look here, my young double Dutchman, and answer me straight. When it first saw you, what did the Zuider Zay?"

"Man, I am not a Hollander; I am an Afrikander. I come from Doornfontein."

"Same thing. Are you a Hottentot on your mother's side of the family or your father's?" put in Haines.

The new boy flamed at this question. To him it was the greatest insult imaginable. He glared at Haines and answered: "Allemachte, I am white!"

"Quite right," said the judicial Tomlinson.

Pondersby turned the attack to a more subtle direction. "Who's your fag-master?" he asked.

Now there was no regular fagging system at North Close, but the new boy could not know that. For the first time he began to look nervous.

"I did not know," he answered, haltingly.

"Then you know now. Didn't Old Beefy assign you to anybody? Well, in that case the rule is you go up to auction."

There was a chorus of assent from the other boys, with admiring glances at the brainy Pondersby.

The latter proceeded to make a rostrum for himself by putting one of the wooden

"—every novi is obliged to serve for four weeks as slave, skivvy, scullion, or scourer of the pots and pans. In brief, gentlemen, he has to fag, and be deuced smart at it if he wants to keep his bally skin intact. Is it what-ho, my hearties?"

"What-ho it is!" chorused the assembly, according to the school catch-phrase of the day.

arm-chairs up on the table and mounting into position. For hammer he sent a small boy to fetch a couple of fives-bats. The latter spread the news of the entertainment *en route*, and soon the reading-room was chock-a-block with grinning boyhood.

Pondersby clapped the bats together to secure silence. "Gentlemen and Fellow Freemen," he began. "According to the immemorial custom of the school since the time of Henry the Eighth of blessed memory—on whom be peace——"

"I doubt it," murmured the judicial Tomlinson.

"I have the honour to present to you, gentlemen, the latest acquisition to our little circle—to wit, the half-boiled turnip, swede, or mangel-wurzel you behold at yonder end of the table. This slave has been assigned to no fag-master, so, pursuant to immemorial custom, he is to be put up to public auction. I will first declare unto you the conditions of sale——"

"What's his name?" put in "A Voice."

"Silence in the penny seats!" thundered Pondersby. "I will reach his name and points in due, proper, correct, and Parliamentary order. I have first to state that the bids must be in cold, hard, and ready cash, and that the highest bidder will have to disgorge to Mr. Treasurer Tomlinson before

this assembly disperses. Such money, specie, bullion, or other legal tender will be applied to the purchase of potted meats for tea for the upper table——"

"All the tables!" was a general interruption. "Play fair, Pondo!"

"For all the tables, if the money allows," amended Pondersby, blandly, in deference to the popular clamour. "And that any misguided youth who attempts to prevaricate, permutate, pertrickulate, or bilk in the matter of the bids will be dealt with indelibly by hand, hoof, and cricket-stump. Slave-dog, advance! He answers, gentlemen, to the name of Yoppy Oxo, or so he informs me. Far be it from me to doubt his word——"

"It does not want it to be pronounced 'Oxo,'" put in the new boy, obstinately.

"Silence, thou parboiled turnip-top, lest worse befall thee! He further informs me, gentlemen, that he is a citizen of no mean city, to wit, Doornfontein, where the fountain-pens come from. I understand that this is somewhere at the other end of our respected earth, planet, globe, or spheroid, but no guarantee whatsoever will be given or implied. He is, as you will note, gentlemen, of a ruddy and pleasing countenance, and right well equipped in point of biceps, triceps, and quadriceps for the work of scraping footer-boots, scouring ink-pots, swotting impots, and the like—in fact, a very useful thing to have about the study. I am instructed to offer him without reserve. Make me a bid, my hearties."

"Ha'penny."

Pondersby pointed a finger of dignified rebuke in the direction of the bid: "Varlet, cease thy babbling! This slave-dog is offered without reserve, but under no circs will I accept less than threepence for him."

"Threepence"—"Sixpence"—"Eightpence"—"And a half"—"And a collar-stud."

"Eightpence-ha'penny and a collar-stud I'm offered, gentlemen. Is it a gold stud, sir? Only bone? Tut-tut! Any advance on eightpence-ha'penny and a bone collar-stud? Tenpence I'm bid. A shilling—you're a sportsman, sir, although you've got a voice like a slate-pencil."

"One and a penny"—"And a postcard"—"One-and-three."

"One-and-three I'm bid. A puny, puking,

piffling one-and-three. Come, my noble sportsmen, let nothing you dismay. One-and-four I'm bid—one-and-six. Only one-and-six? Remember, gents, the bullion is to be turned into turkey and tongue."

"No; salmon and shrimp!" put in "A Voice."

"Two bob," shouted Haines, boldly.

Now Haines shared the same study with Pondersby; so the latter wasted no effort in trying to coax further bids. "Two bob. Going at two bob. Going—going—gone! Mr. Haines wins in a canter. Slave-dog Oxo, hie thee to Mr. Haines's study, there to await his pleasure and obey his commands! Avaunt!"

The new boy proved a strange mixture of bucolic credulity and dogged Boer obstinacy where he knew his ground. To the name of "Oxo" he refused to answer—they were forced to change his nickname to that of "Dutchy," which he accepted. Further, he lay in wait for a boy who referred to Kaffir ancestry and sent him to hospital with a cricket-stump across the shins. But he accepted unquestioningly the *rôle* of fag to the Haines-Pondersby study, and as such performed the most ridiculous tasks and errands for his masters.

He cut out paper confetti steadily for a whole half-holiday for a house paper-chase, under orders; he ran on all fours three times across the yard and back in an ordered attempt to beat a fictitious "novi's record"; he went obediently to the school hairdresser for a pair of false whiskers, which he was ordered to don whenever he cleaned football-boots for his masters. Only tell him that it was the immemorial custom of the school since the days of Henry VIII., and apparently he would carry out an order of any degree of fatuity.

So Pondersby grew bolder.

One Saturday afternoon after dinner he put his head outside his study and called, "Slave ahoy!"

Ochse came to the Haines-Pondersby study at a lope.

"What art thou doing after footer this afternoon?"

"I was going to change back to my ordinary clothes," answered the fag, in honest simplicity.

"Dolt, I meant after thou hadst changed."

"I don't know. Perhaps I read a book."

Pondersby pointed a solemn finger at him.

"Art thou aware that to-morrow is Presentation Sunday?"

"Man, it doesn't matter to me—I am of the Dutch Reformed Church," answered the new boy, thinking that it might be some church festival unknown to him.

"Clown, know thou that Presentation Sunday is the second Sunday at school in the life of every novi. Since the days of Henry the Eighth—on whom be peace—it has been the custom that on this day he shall present to his house-master some trophy of the chase. By thine own hands must thou capture weasel, stoat, mole, hare, or rabbit, and offer it to thy house-master on a lordly dish. Dost thou know how to catch rabbits?"

"I have caught many things out to the farm, but not rabbits never."

"Thine education has been sadly neglected, mefears. No matter—do thy best. Hie thee to the warren by Hinckley Woods. My blessing goes with thee."

He omitted to mention that Farmer Basset, who owned the land, was always prowling about with an ash-plant on the look-out for trespassers, especially the boys of the school.

Late that afternoon the young Afrikander returned, much to Pondersby's surprise, with a small rabbit. (Pondersby's plan was in no way dependent on such a result.) He explained with justifiable pride that he had stalked the rabbit for half an hour, and finally brought it down with a stone at fifteen yards.

"Did you see Farmer Basset?"

"With a red face and a big stick?" asked Ochse.

"That's him."

"I saw him, but I never let him see me. I took cover," answered the young Afrikander, shrewdly.

"Oh!" said Haines, blankly.

Pondersby resumed the mastery of the situation.

"Good dog, good dog! Now thou canst dress thy rabbit in fitting fashion, and to-morrow afternoon, when dinner is full sped, thou shalt set it on a lordly dish and offer it humbly to Old Beefy in his study."

After Sunday dinner it was Mr. Calthrop's custom to retire to his study for a pipe and a nap. Consequently he did not hear the roars of laughter from the prep.-room that burst out after Ochse had left it bearing in his hands a biological dissecting-dish of Pondersby's, with the rabbit pinned out on it so as to expose the interior anatomy, and decorated with fancy ribbons and a flag-label marked "With Comps."

Nor did he hear the several tappings at his study-door. Perhaps he muttered "Come in" in his sleep, for the new boy thought he heard it and entered. Finding the house-master asleep, he was somewhat nonplussed. He had been coached to drop humbly on one knee and say: "Oh King, live for ever! May rabbits never sit on your grandmother's grave. Deign to accept from your lowly servant this tribute of the chase. Heaven preserve Your Majesty!"

Since Mr. Calthrop was asleep it was clearly useless to make the set speech, so Ochse put the dissecting-dish in a prominent position on the study-table and withdrew. Then he put on his Sunday straw to go out for a walk.

Pondersby, Haines, and Co. were dumb-founded when they saw him return calmly and serenely without the rabbit.

"What did he say?" they asked.

"He did not say nothing. He was asleep."

"You surely didn't leave the dish there?"

"Why for not, man?"

"He'll see my name under it!" muttered Pondersby, angrily, biting his lips. "Go at once and fetch it back again, you little Kaffir fool!"

Ochse flamed red. "I am not a Kaffir," said he. "I will not go."

"Do as you're told."

"I am not a Kaffir," repeated the new boy, doggedly. He had been suddenly roused into one of those moods in which verbal threats and physical violence would not move him one iota.

Pondersby and Haines consulted anxiously in whispers. Neither of them dared to go into the house-master's study to rescue the rabbit and the dissecting-dish. Pondersby swore aloud, and, psychological curiosity, that was as the opening of a sluice-gate to let a flood of understanding into the new boy's mind. At last he grasped the position. Again he flamed red—with shame at the way he had been taken in—and then he marched doggedly out of the room for his Sunday walk.

Mr. Calthrop looked in his quiet, ironic way over the assembled house. His voice was even and without a trace of anger—if anything, it conveyed the suggestion of slight boredom. He knew how to control boys.

"This afternoon I received a little present," he said. "Very kind of someone—very thoughtful indeed. The dissection was a trifle crude, though. Now I want to know whom I am to thank for this unusual but flattering attention." He looked around with half-closed eyelids.

No answer.

"Come, come, no undue modesty; no blush to find it fame. Who is the artist of the scalpel?"

No answer.

"Let me give you a little help. There was a certain name under the dissecting-dish."

"The *dish* was mine, sir," admitted Pondersby, sullenly. "But the rabbit was not mine, and I didn't place it in your study. I can't very well say more than that, sir."

"Very creditable to your honour, Pondersby. We all know what a tender, delicate plant it is. I respect your feelings. Now, who was daring enough to take this dish from Pondersby's care without his sanction? Who put it in my study?"

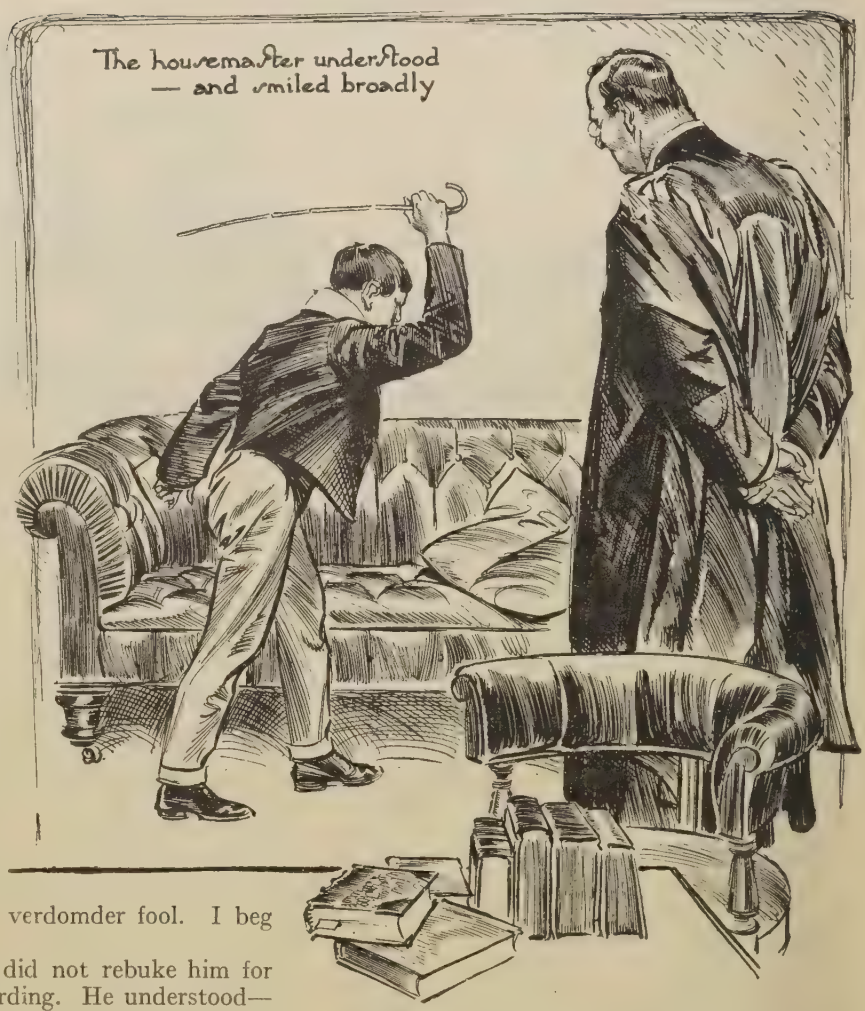
Ochse held up his hand in silence.

"You needn't hold up your hand, Ochse;

we don't do that here. We prefer the spoken hail. You can accompany me to my study."

In his study Mr. Calthrop looked slowly and curiously over the new boy. "What on earth made you do it? You don't look impertinent. You don't look as if you had the artistry to plan this piece of devilment. Be frank with me."

The young Afrikander looked at his house-master eye to eye and answered quite simply, but with deep feeling: "Man, I was a fool. I did not know. I was a verdomder fool. I beg your pardon."



Mr. Calthrop did not rebuke him for his choice of wording. He understood—in part, at least. "Well," said he, at length, "I am not going to ask you who was at the root of it. We don't do that over here, you know. I can form my own conclusions."

"I will take the cane," said the Afrikander.

"No; that would be unfair. I have your word that this was not your own idea?"

"It was not, sir."

"Then I will let you go."

"Will you let me have the cane for one moment, sir?"

"That's a queer thing to ask, Ochse. But here it is. What do you want with it?"

The new boy took the cane and walked with it over to the sofa. Then he brought it down on a sofa-cushion, hard—once, twice, thrice, up to a dozen times.

The house-master understood—and smiled broadly. "No doubt they *are* listening," said he. "Well, it's not at all a bad idea."

In the prep.-room the boys crowded round Ochse with expressions of sympathy and surprise at his unruffled demeanour.

"Great Scot! He must have been wild with you!"

"I never heard such a whacking!"

"Twelve of them, too!"

"It's nothing," returned the novi, calmly. "To the school at Doornfontein I had much worse than that. I do not mind this kind of whacking. It's nothing at all."

"He's a good plucked 'un, that's what he is," was the comment of Tomlinson.

"That's right," added another boy. "Dutchy's a real sportsman. I say, we ought to pay it back on that dirty dog Pondo."

There were loud murmurs of approval.

"Shall we make him stand treat to Dutchy at the tucker?"

The suggestion met with instant favour from the rest of the house. "Right-ho!" they chorused, and again "Right-ho!"

What Six Rich Men Could Do.

By E. SETON VALENTINE.

Illustrated by George Morrow.

ROCKEFELLER. PIERPONT MORGAN. ASTOR. STRATHCONA. CARNEGIE. ROTHSCHILD.

IT is not improbable that the six richest men in the world are on a footing of personal acquaintance. They may have met in the same room—they may even have lunched or dined together. Let your imagination dwell for a moment on the scene. There is the table laid, and six elderly, not too-well-groomed figures seated about it, who, having partaken sparingly of simple fare, are now sipping a little port or swallowing furtively a tabloid of pepsine. At the head, by virtue of his vastly preponderant possessions, we note the spare form and sharp, keen visage of Mr. J. D. Rockefeller; at the foot is the white-bearded, imperturbable Lord Rothschild. At Mr. Rockefeller's right is the trim, rather intellectual-looking Mr. Astor, whose rent-roll is eight million pounds a year; next to him is the patriarch, Lord Strathcona, who is credited with a snug fortune of one hundred million pounds. Opposite them are Mr. Carnegie, round and ruddy-faced, and the dominating, almost saturnine personality of Mr. Pierpont Morgan.

These six men talk quietly to each other across the table, in matter-of-fact tones, about nothing in particular. Not once, probably, is their conversation lit up by any remark or speculation upon the tremendous fact which their little gathering suggests. Combination does not occur to them, not even that little sum in addition which rises quite naturally to the brain of any observer of the group and makes him gasp for breath. For he, having an alert imagination, sweeping the boundaries of this kingdom, regarding its social interests, its financial and economic values, its great commercial and industrial aggregations, sees in a single glance the whole fabric prostrate and helpless at the feet of that one tremendous fact.

ONE THOUSAND MILLIONS OF POUNDS!

Yes, that is what this prosaic gathering of six elderly gentlemen in a small dining-room at Claridge's undeniably signifies. This is the colossal sum which, were they each

and all to realize to the uttermost farthing on all descriptions of their properties, land, houses, stock, and chattels, they would be able to heap up together, and, were they animated by a single purpose and resolved at all costs to carry it through, they might alter the face of Europe and the destinies of mankind.

For think of what a thousand millions sterling means. This half-dozen of men, whom you would probably not regard twice if you saw them walking along the Strand, would not only be able to pay off the whole of the National Debt of Great Britain and Ireland, amounting to seven hundred and fifty millions, accumulated in the course of two centuries by a population now numbering forty-five millions, but they would have enough left over to buy the National Gallery, the South Kensington Museum, and every first-class battleship in the British Fleet.

Such wealth is bewildering, such possibilities of power on the part of these six all but untitled, apparently undistinguished, unostentatious members of the community. But do you suppose for a moment that they are troubled by any such thought? Do you suppose that the dazzling significance of their potentialities ever suggests itself for a moment to any of their minds? It is very unlikely; because it is one of the most usual limitations of a millionaire that he has no imagination; or if he retains a shred of this quality, his own wealth has completely lost its glamour. If such men are conscious of their own power they never use it outside of their own special interests. They are like Samson playing at tiddledewinks. One employs his fortune to provide free fiction and racing tips for the poor; another gives to hospitals; another to colleges; another buys a newspaper and a magazine and himself writes therefor, impossible tales of houris and buried treasure. All of them bury their talent under a bushel; none of them allow their minds to dwell for a moment on the great things they could do, while as for the greater things they could do in combination, one doubts if even Mr. Pierpont Morgan or Mr. Astor has ever given it a moment's thought.

THIS HALF-DOZEN MEN WOULD BE ABLE TO PAY OFF THE WHOLE NATIONAL DEBT.

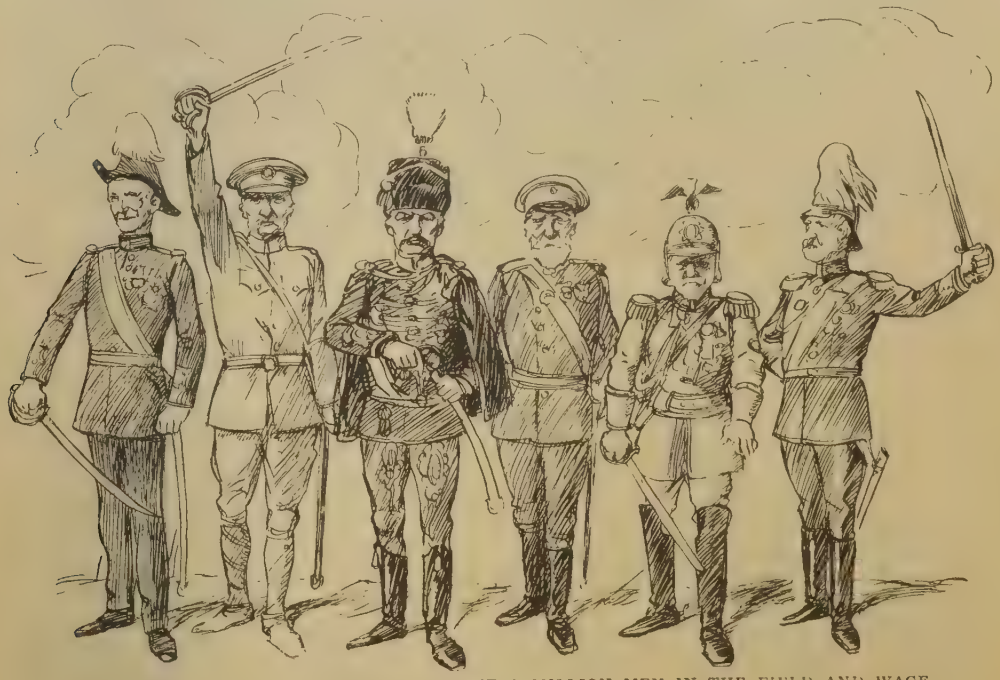
But what if, instead of being what they are, essentially prosaic, "practical," and commonplace, these six men became suddenly converted into six men of restless, enterprising, imaginative, and energetic nature, would they be content to doze away their wealth—that such a stupendous weapon as this should not be seized and put to some mighty use? Rest assured they would not, when once the idea had struck them, let it slip away without bearing fruit. The meeting of six such men, linked together in such a plutocratic brotherhood, would be pregnant with events which might easily change the history of mankind. They, at least, would not be content to separate with a few dreary banalities about the weather or the price of stocks or the new rates of insurance—or even with some tepid talk about endowing a new hospital or laboratory.

"Gentlemen," one of them might exclaim, "we six men in this room have a thousand

million pounds between us. We are stronger than any single organized power on earth. We can do things. Let us exert ourselves—let us see what we can do. Let us six men before we die really put forth our combined spending power. Instead of the futile, humdrum life other millionaires lead, let us exhibit to the world all our strength and all our glory."

And then, like the members of the Tiers État in the tennis-court, they would clasp hands and swear not to separate until they had achieved consolidation and a programme.

What things could they not achieve with a thousand million pounds! Suppose they were aggressive and inclined to wage war. Upon what a scale could they not wage it! One of these six men once actually did put a thousand men into the field, fully armed and equipped, and maintained them for a year or two during the South African War, at his sole personal expense. But this sextet could, if they chose, put a million men in the field and maintain them for ten years, perhaps for twenty. Napoleon from 1790 to 1815 involved Britain in charges of six hundred and fifty million pounds. The Crimean War cost upwards of thirty million pounds for two years alone. On the other hand, there are far greater economies with a better system, yet the South African War did not cost much under two hundred and fifty million pounds. But a million armed men, with equipment to match, is a thing the world has only seen for brief periods at a time; nor is there any reason to suppose that it would be necessary for such a force to be in the field for more than a campaign or two. Modern equipment is a very serious thing; neither Napoleon's levies nor the armies of America in 1861–65 were more than a quarter drilled, fed, clothed, and armed. Of course it is assumed that in such an enterprise the sextet would embark all their principal. It would be necessary to spend money in order to conquer the earth; but doubtless the conquest of the earth could be achieved with a thousand millions. If



THIS SEXTET COULD, IF THEY CHOSE, PUT A MILLION MEN IN THE FIELD AND WAGE WAR FOR TEN YEARS.

Wars have grown far more expensive than they used to be, not merely in the higher pay of officers and men and the increased cost of rations, but in the cost of transports, horses, and artillery. The American Revolutionary War, lasting from 1775 to 1781, burdened the country with one hundred and forty million pounds. The wars with

they did not spend their principal—which in the circumstances is unthinkable, because all property would be in a fluid state—their income would amount to between thirty and forty millions a year, which would about defray the charges of a war similar to that between America and Spain or the Austro-Prussian War.

THEY MIGHT FORM A JUNTA OF MIGHTY ADMIRALS AND ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL DOMINION OF THE SEA.

In lieu of being illustrious generals, perhaps our millionaires might elect to compass their ambitions on the sea. They might achieve universal dominion by the possession of a great Navy, and of themselves form an imposing junta of mighty admirals. It would matter little to them where they built their fleet, or whether they bought it ready-made. What is the value of a fleet in being of a first-class Power? What is the worth of the British Fleet, one of the marvels of the world? Probably not more—lock, stock, and barrel, from keel to fore-top—than a couple of hundred millions, if so much. A five hundred million pounds fleet would be unique, overpowering, irresistible. Such a fleet would sweep the seas of everything afloat, from a trawler to a Dreadnought. We are so accustomed to regarding the British Fleet as something so stupendous, almost omnipotent, that it is a shock to us to reflect that these six men have the wealth to build one far finer, stronger, and more efficient. And yet we are told an Empire of sixty million white men groans under the burden of what six men could carry on their own shoulders and not feel the weight.

It is really difficult not to be appalled in

THEY COULD SUMMON THE WHOLE POPULATION AND PAY THEM TWENTY POUNDS APIECE.

considering some of the ways in which our six rich friends could disburse their money, if they were really bent on doing so, to the utmost of its purchasing power. You have, first of all, to consider comparative values. Now, the whole of the house property in Great Britain is only worth two hundred and twenty million pounds. All the buildings in London are only valued at forty-four millions of pounds. The gross value, or gross estimated rental, of all the property in England and Wales is only about two hundred and sixty millions. Therefore, at the behest of these six men, for a period of nearly four years no one in the kingdom need pay a penny of rent. Or, if they chose to be more directly liberal, they could summon the whole population of the British Isles to come forward and receive, every man, woman, and child, the sum of twenty pounds apiece. Think of

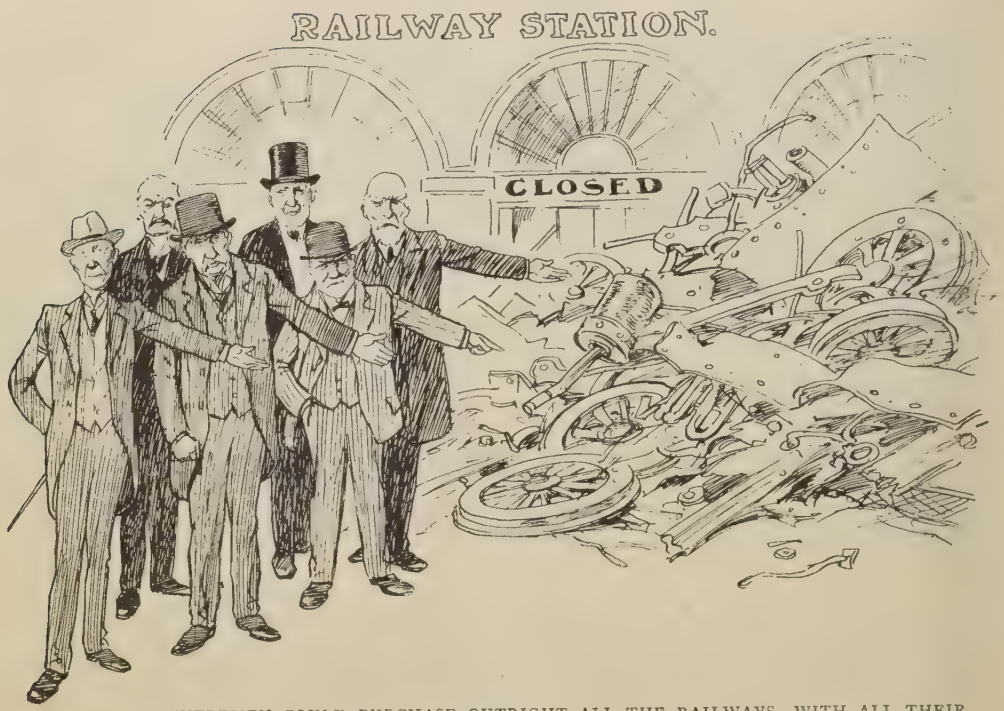
The wealth of these six millionaires far exceeds the total value of the product of British industry for a whole year. Nearly seven millions of workers, toiling six days a week, produced a net output of British industry for 1910-11 of seven hundred and twelve million pounds. These six men would be able to pay for all the result of a year's toil accumulated in twelve months by a whole nation of toilers. They could buy up all the wealth of a year — all the machinery, all the manufactured goods, all the steel, all the iron, all the tobacco, all the sugar. That is what such wealth as theirs means.

Another and striking example of their potentiality would be to the taste of us all. These six men could run the United Kingdom for six years and longer, pay the total amount of its expenses, and remit everything to the

IF THEY CHOSE, NOBODY WOULD PAY ANY TAXES. ALL CUSTOM HOUSES WOULD CLOSE DOWN. LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS WOULD BE SENT FREE.

such a memorable incident of wealth distribution—the millions, young, old, rich, and poor, passing in a column six deep before these six open-handed millionaires, and each receiving his twenty golden sovereigns! Most of this would have to be specially coined (there would probably be no such amount of gold available for the purpose), and one might suggest a coin with a multiple profile of the princely six on the obverse.

taxpayer. Under this excellent and generous dispensation nobody would pay any taxes. All Custom Houses would close down. There would be no excise. Letters and telegrams would be sent free. For the total receipts of John Bull from all these sources is about one hundred and fifty millions, and our six millionaires have a thousand millions in their coffers. What a happy, care-free land England would be for those six years!



THESE SIX GENTLEMEN COULD PURCHASE OUTRIGHT ALL THE RAILWAYS, WITH ALL THEIR ROLLING-STOCK AND BUILDINGS, IN ENGLAND.

What a debt of gratitude we would all owe Messrs. Rockefeller, Carnegie, Strathcona, Morgan, Astor, and Rothschild! And how happy they would surely be at having bestowed this boon upon us! Who would hesitate to erect statues to all the six in recognition of this splendid public service?

Or there is another boon they could confer. Everybody realizes the imperfection of the arrangements regarding insurance money. Unpleasant things have generally got to happen before the beneficiaries can lay hands upon the sum insured for—death, fire, injury, old age—and a great deal of cash must be expended in the meanwhile in premiums. How nice it would be if all of us who are insured could "touch" (as the French say) all the money that is coming to us or our heirs, immediately! It is a great deal of money in the aggregate, for the inhabitants of the United Kingdom are insured for no less a sum than eight hundred million pounds sterling. But our six influential friends could manage it for us. They could pay every man, woman, and child his or her insurance money and still have a couple of hundred millions left to give a little dinner at Claridge's occasionally, or buy a stall at the theatre.

Or there are the mountainous municipal and county debts of the kingdom which are causing political economists to regard the future so gravely—debts which, in the language of one writer, are "hanging like a millstone round the neck of the nation"—debts which are sending up the rates to a figure undreamed of a generation or two ago. This local indebtedness mounts to the high figure of four hundred and ninety-four million pounds. What a small matter these six men would make of discharging the whole of this in full! They could do so were it even twice as large.

What is the total of Britain's commerce—her exports and imports? Last year we imported five hundred and nineteen million three hundred and ninety thousand pounds' worth of goods, and we exported three hundred and seventy-eight million one hundred and eighty thousand pounds' worth. That is to say, our total commerce represents eight hundred and ninety-seven million five hundred and seventy thousand pounds a year. Such a sum is staggering to many of the nations of the world. Our six gentlemen would not be staggered, because, great as the sum is, it does not equal the cash in their own pockets. In other words, they could buy up John Bull and then sell him again.

What further could they do? Well, they could purchase the total coal supply of the kingdom—not for a year, but for more than

eight years, for the selling value of all our coal is only one hundred and twenty-three million pounds per annum. Would it not be the sublimity of malice for these six men to secure a corner in coal—a real, effective corner, not a fictitious one—carry off the whole of Britain's coal supply by the simple expedient of paying twice the price for it, and make a huge bonfire of it to heat the Arctic regions, while all our factories closed down, our railways stopped, and we sat at home shivering?

Speaking of railways, these six gentlemen could, of course, purchase outright all the railways, with all their rolling-stock and buildings, in England. Another thing they could do with their money would be to buy up all the motor-cars in the world, and still have enough left to buy the Panama and Suez Canals, and then sufficient to buy up the total value of British shipping for ten years. Britain's shipping means forty-eight million pounds a year; our six millionaires could pay for the whole of it for ten years and still keep sufficient to buy cigars and champagne with.

Great Britain does a business of ninety-four million pounds a year in cotton. These six rich men could take all this cotton, these millions of bales of goods, for a period of ten years, and sink them in the bottom of the sea or give them away to the Hindus, who might have a change of dress every day of the year.

But stay—there is another course their joint enterprise might take. Influenced by at least two of their number, who are fervent Scots, they might be tempted to undertake a thing of no less magnitude than the purchase of Scotland. Scotland, of course, is not to be bought, nor are her sons venal; but the assessed value of her real estate is only nine hundred and thirty million pounds.

One can see the six millionaires contemplating these figures with a jubilant eye. "Dirt cheap," we hear them say. "Really a capital investment. And how lucky we happen to have just the price asked in our pockets! Let's buy Scotland." And Sandy, tempted by the ready cash, hands over his kingdom.

These, then, are amongst the stupendous and lurid things these six elderly gentlemen could do if they possessed the requisite audacity and imagination. But instead of any of these things they will do nothing, which is, perhaps, just as well for the peace of the world; for wealth such as theirs is far too dangerous a power not to be safely locked up and the key in the pockets of six just such quiet, safe, unimaginative elderly gentlemen, who will probably be greatly surprised to find themselves the subjects of such speculation and the heroes of this article.

INFLUENCED BY TWO OF THEIR NUMBER, THE OMNIPOTENT SIX MIGHT BE INDUCED TO BUY ALL SCOTLAND.

The Wonderful Garden.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

By E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

CHAPTER XVI. AND LAST.

DAME ELEANOUR AND STEPHANOTIS.

THERE were now two things for the three C.'s to look forward to—the return of Rupert and Lord Andor's coming-of-age party. The magic of the waxen man had ended so seriously that no one liked to suggest the trying of any new spells, though Charlotte still cherished the hope that it might some day seem possible to try a spell for bringing the picture to life.

But the banishment of Rupert had left a kind of dull blankness which made it difficult to start new ideas.

Uncle Charles was less frequently visible even than at first, though when he did appear he was more like an uncle and less like a polite acquaintance. The books the children had discovered had meant a very great deal to him; he told them so more than once. He went away now, almost every other day, to London to the British Museum, to Canterbury to its Library, and once, for two days, to look up some old parchments in the Bodleian Library, which, as of course you know, meant going to Oxford. Mr. Penfold was very kind, and the children did quite a lot of building under his directions; but altogether it was a flattish time.

Then suddenly things began to grow interesting again. What began it was the visit of a tall gentleman in spectacles. He had a long nose and a thin face, with a slow, pleasant smile. He called when the uncle was out, and left a card. Caroline heard Harriet explaining that the master was out, and rushed after the caller in hospitable eagerness.

"I'm sure uncle wouldn't like you to go away without resting," she said, breathlessly, when he stopped at the sound of her pattering feet on the gravel, and she caught up with him; "after you've come such a long way, and such a hot day, too."

Charlotte and Charles, in the meantime, had hastily examined the gentleman's card in the Russian bowl on the hall-table. "Mr. Alfred Appleby," it said, and added, as Charlotte said, most of the alphabet, beginning with "F.R.S., F.S.A.," and this mingled with his name so that when Caroline privately asked them what was on the card they could only think of "Mr. Alphabet."

Mr. Appleby accepted Caroline's invitation, and turned back with her.

"I'm sorry," she said, "that I can't take you straight into the drawing-room; but if you don't mind waiting in the dining-room a minute, I'll get the drawing-room key and take you in there; only I'm afraid the dining-

room's rather awful, because we've been thinking of playing Red Indians, and the gum is drying on the scalps on most of the chairs."

Mr. Appleby declined the drawing-room at any price, and was able to tell them several things they did not know about Red Indians, wampum, moccasins, and war-paint. He was felt to be quite the nicest thing that had happened since what Caroline and Charlotte, in private conversation, always spoke of as "that awful image day." When Mrs. Wilmington came in to see what those children were up to, Mr. Appleby won her heart by addressing her as "Mrs. Davenant." "Took me for the lady of the house at once," she told Harriet.

The gentleman stayed to luncheon, and very good company they found him. He told the most amusing stories, all new to the hearers. He carved the fowls in a masterly way, and had two goes of pudding. And all the time he looked with exactly the right admiration and wonder at the portrait of Dame Eleanour in her ruff, with her strange magic philtres and her two wonderful books.

"We found those books, Mr. Alphabet," said Charlotte. And then the whole story had to be told. Mr. Alphabet—for so we may call him now—was deeply interested, and nodded understandingly as the tale of the different spells unfolded itself.

"And do you propose to continue your experiments?" he asked, when he had heard the tale of the leopard, the last of the adventures which *could* be told, for the affair of the wax man was, of course, a thing that could never be disclosed.

"There's nothing particular that we want to do a spell about just now," said Caroline. "I did think of trying to do one to get father and mother home, but it might be very inconvenient to them to leave India just now. You never know, and we shouldn't like to work a spell that would only be a worry to them."

Mr. Alphabet said, "Quite so!"

"What *I* keep on wanting to try," said Charlotte, "is to make *her* come alive"—she nodded towards the picture—"only there doesn't seem to be any spell for that in any of the books. She looks such a dear, doesn't she? Suppose she made a spell herself and did something magic to that picture, so that it should come alive if someone in nowadaystimes got hold of the other end of the spell; you know what I mean?"

"Quite so," said the visitor; "why not?"

"It wouldn't be the real her, I suppose?" said Charlotte; "but it might be like a cinematograph and a phonograph mixed up. I want to see her move and hear her speak, like she did when she was alive."

And again the gentleman said, "Why not?"

"If only we could find out the proper spell," said Charles. "You see, everything came right that we've done, from the fern-seed on."

"I must think it over," said Mr. Alphabet; "and now I think, as I've stayed so long, I'll take the liberty of inviting myself to stay till your uncle returns. I should very much like to see this wonderful garden."

The afternoon passed delightfully. Mr. Alphabet was one of those people with whom you feel comfortable from the first. He told them the names of many flowers which had been strangers to them, and he talked of magic, Indian magic and Chinese magic, the magic of Egypt and of Ceylon, of Australia and of Mexico; and they listened and longed for more and got more to listen to. When, after tea, the uncle returned, and having warmly greeted Mr. Alphabet took him away to his study, the children agreed that their new friend was "the right sort," and that they hoped they would see him again often.

They saw him once again, and once only.

And that was when, he and the uncle having come out of the study together, the uncle went to see William about putting the horse in to drive Mr. Alphabet to the station, and Mr. Alphabet came into the dining-room to say good-bye to the children.

"I've been thinking over what you said about Dame Eleanour," he said to Charlotte, "and I'll tell you what. You ask your uncle to allow you to hang a green curtain over her, frame and all, and then make garlands of suitable flowers. Then hang the garlands across the picture and wait. You must never lift the curtain, of course, and the curtain must be green. And you must wish very much to see her move and to hear her speak. And I shall be very much surprised if you don't in—let me see—in about three weeks."

"And do you really think?" asked Charlotte, with gleaming eyes.

"Well, with anyone else I shouldn't dare to think anything. But you've been so exceptionally fortunate hitherto, haven't you? With *you* I should think there could be no doubt of success. I don't say you'll see her *here*, mind you. I don't say how or when you will see her. These things are among the great mysteries. Perhaps one day when you're at breakfast you'll see the

curtain move slightly, and at first you'll think it is the air from the open window, and then you'll see a bulge in the green curtain—don't forget it's to be green—and then a white hand will draw it back, and she will come stepping down out of her frame on to the nearest chair, with her rustling silk petticoat and her scarlet, high-heeled shoes. Perhaps that's how she'll come. I only say 'perhaps,' mind. Because, of course, you might meet her in the wood, or in some scene of gay revelry, or in the wonderful garden itself; her garden, which is kept just as she planted it. There's an old document your uncle's been showing me. She leaves her blessing to the family so long as the garden's kept as it was in her time. With a long list of the flowers and a plan of the garden, with the proper places for the flowers all marked. Did you know that?"

"You're not kidding us?" Charles asked, suddenly.

"Could you think it of me? No, I see you couldn't. You try my spell and write and tell me how it works. All right, Davenant—coming. Where's my hat?—oh, outside, yes—and my umbrella, right. Good-bye, all of you. Thank you very much for a most delightful day."

"Thank you," said Caroline, and they all said "Good-bye, and come again soon!"

Uncle Charles, when the matter was laid before him, raised no objection to the curtaining of the picture. He even drove with them to Maidstone and bought special curtains for the purpose, soft, wide, green woollen stuff it was, very soft, very wide, very green. Mrs. Wilmington hemmed the curtains and the uncle himself, tottering on the housemaid's steps, hung the curtains in place.

"THE UNCLE HIMSELF, TOTTERING ON THE HOUSEMAID'S STEPS, HUNG THE CURTAINS IN PLACE."

"Take your last look," he said, coming down the steps and holding the green curtains apart, so that Dame Eleanour looked out of the dusk of the curtains almost as if she were alive. "Take a good look at her, so that you will know her again if you do see her."

"If?" said Charlotte.

"I mean when," said the uncle, letting the long, straight folds of the curtains fall into place.

The question of garlands now occupied all thoughts, even those of the uncle.

"Arbor vitæ," said he, "means 'Tree of life.'"

"Then we'll have that," said Caroline, "especially as it means 'Unchanging friendship' too." She thought of Rupert. "I hope Rupert's back before she appears," she added. "*That* would make him believe in magic, wouldn't it?"

The uncle, for the first time, was introduced to the "Language of," and

he seemed much struck by the literary style of that remarkable work.

"Never did the florographist select from cunning Nature's wondrous field a more appropriate interpreter of man's innermost passions than when he chose the arbor vitæ to formulate the significance, 'Live for me.' I was not aware that human beings *could* write like that," he said; "and I thought you said 'arbor vitæ' meant something quite different."

"They often do," said Caroline. "We used to think the book didn't know its own mind, but we think now it put in new meanings when it found them out. It's rather confusing at first. But 'Live for me' is fine. It's just what we want the picture to do, isn't it? What else?"

"I leave it to you," said the uncle, laying down the book. "Your author's style is too attractive. I could waste all the rest of the daylight on him. Farewell. If I can be of any assistance in hanging the garlands, let me know. Good-bye."

Nobody was quite sure what a garland was, because in books people sometimes wore garlands on their heads, when of course they would be wreaths, and sometimes twined them round pillars, in which case they would be like Christmas decorations.

"We had better have both kinds," said Caroline, "to be quite sure."

On a foundation of twigs of the arbor vitæ twined round with Jaeger wool, originally bought for Caroline to knit a vest for her Aunt Emmeline ("But I know I shall never finish it," she said), symbolic flowers were tied, some in circlets or wreaths, others in long straight lengths. "Rye grass, which means 'A changeable disposition,'" was suggested by Charlotte, "because we do want her to change: from paint to alive," she said; "and pink verbena means 'Family reunion,' and she is a relation, after all. Besides, pink's such a pretty colour."

Caroline ascertained that yew meant "Life," but Charles was considered to have made the hit of the afternoon by his discovery that Jacob's ladder meant "Come down," which was, of course, exactly what they wanted the lady to do.

The gardener knew what Jacob's ladder was, though the children did not, and their fear that it might be a dull shrub with invisible flowers was dispelled when they beheld its blue brightness.

"We ought to wear coronilla ourselves," said Caroline; "a new piece every day. It means 'Success attend your wishes.'" But the gardener had not heard of coronilla. "The book says it's a flowering shrub of the pea family," Caroline read from the "Language of," which, as usual, she had been carrying under her arm, "with small pinnate leaves, whatever they are. An elegant bush with reddish-brown blossoms when first expanded, varying to yellow at a later period of their graceful existence."

"Oh, that?" said the gardener. "That'll be scorpion's senna. That's what that be. Something to do with the shape of the stars in the sky. Old women sells it for a charm for shy sweethearts."

"In our book it says 'Success crown your wishes.'"

"Just so," said the gardener; "and she names the day. That's it along there."

The garlands looked very handsome and the wreaths very beautiful. It was Caroline who made this distinction. And their dark foliage and the bright pink and blue and yellow of their flowers showed charmingly against the green curtain.

"And now," said Caroline, "we've just got to wait, and Charlotte and I must stick to our glove and handkerchief cases if they're going to be ready to go in time for mother's birthday. And Charles, if I were you, I should get Mr. Penfold to show you chip-carving like he offered to, and do a box for her. And we mustn't forget that we're not to look behind the curtain."

"I sha'n't forget that," said Charlotte. "What I should like to forget's my head. It feels twice its proper size."

"I've got a headache, too," said Caroline. "I expect it's the sun."

"If it was the sun, mine would ache too," said Charles; "but with me it's the nose. I've had four hankies since breakfast. And one of those was the Wilmington's."

"Well, let's go and get on with our embroidery. All my silks are frightfully tangled."

They were not disentangled that day. The headaches were worse. I will not dwell on the development of the catastrophe. The doctor put it in a few brief, well-chosen words the next day.

"The girls have got measles right enough, and the boy hasn't yet."

You see the tragedy? Measles, with Lord Andor's party and Rupert's return both fixed for the week after next. No words of mine could do justice to the feelings of the three C.'s. I think perhaps, on the whole, it was worse for Charles, who was suspected throughout of impending measles, of which

he was wholly innocent, his cold being only a rather violent example of the everyday kind. He was kept out of draughts, and taken for walks by Mrs. Wilmington, and not allowed to bathe, and he became bored beyond description. Really, the girls were better off in bed, with a brightening vista of jelly, beef-tea, fish, chicken, leading to natural beef and pudding, and getting up to breakfast.

When the three were re-united it was the very day of Lord Andor's party, and of course they were not allowed to go, "for fear of chills." Charles, after tea had been taken away, shut the dining-room door carefully, and said :—

"I've got something to confess."

"Well?" said the others, as he stopped short, and displayed no intention of ever going on.

"I don't suppose you'll ever care to speak to me again when I've told you."

"Don't be a copy-cat," said Charlotte, sharply. "If you've done anything really, say so. You know we'll stand by you," she added, more kindly.

"Well, then," said Charles, "I'm very sorry. And I do hope it hasn't spoiled the whole show; but you don't know how fed up I was with being alone, and the Wilmington fussing, and the uncle never out of his books for more than a minute at a time. And I did it one day when I felt I couldn't bear anything another minute."

"Did what, dear?" said Caroline, trying to be patient.

"Looked behind the curtains," said Charles, miserably.

"I *knew* you would," said Charlotte; "at least, I mean I should have known if I'd thought of it. It's exactly like you, and I'll never do any magic with you again."

"Oh, yes," said Charles, "rub it in."

"I expect it *has* spoiled it all," said Caroline. "Oh, Charles, how could you?"

"I'm much more sorry than you are," said Charles, wretchedly, "because the magic had begun. She'd gone out of the frame."

"Gone!" said the girls together.

"Quite gone. It was all black behind the curtains. She wasn't there."

"Are you sure?"

"Certain sure."

Both girls sprang towards the curtains, and both stopped short as Charles hastily grabbed an arm of each.

"Don't!" he said. "You wait. I've thought about it a lot. I haven't had anything else to do, you know."

"Poor old Charles!" said Charlotte. "I'm sorry I scratched, but it is aggravating, now, isn't it?"

"Not for you, it isn't," said Charles. "You haven't looked behind the curtains. You haven't broken *your* part of the magic. It's all right for *you*. You'll see her right enough. It's me that won't. You're all right."

"But I expect your looking broke the spell, and she's back again," said Caroline, reaching out a hand to the curtains.

"Don't!" shrieked Charles. "The spell didn't break. It went on. Because I looked again to see if it had. And she wasn't there."

"How often have you looked since?" Caroline asked, severely.

"Every day since," said Charles, in a low voice.

"And when did you look first?"

"The day you went to bed," said Charles, in a still lower voice. "She wasn't there then, and she isn't there now. Oh, don't rag me about it. I sha'n't see her. That's jolly well enough, *I* should think, without you going on at me."

"We won't," said Caroline, heroically, and turned her back on the picture. "But you won't look again, will you, Charles?"

"I sha'n't want to, now you've come back," he said.

And this compliment quite melted the hearts of his sisters. Nothing more was said of Charles's unjustifiable indiscretion.

The next day the uncle asked Caroline if she and Charlotte would care to dust the drawing-room.

"Mrs. Wilmington's going to Lord Andor's *fête*," he said, "and she is very busy."

Mrs. Wilmington gave them the key, and they dusted with earnest care and thoroughness. Charles tried to help, but he was not an expert performer with the duster. More to his mind was the watching of the mandarin's old slow nod, his painted smile, his crossed china hands.

"Oh, to think that the Wilmington's going, and the mineral woman, and Rupert, and everybody but us!" wailed Charlotte.

"Never mind," said Caroline, "there's the Flower of Heart's Desire to look forward to, and Rupert coming back. And think of all the grapes Lord Andor sent us. And the cheques from Mr. Alphabet."

She began to move the old silk handkerchief—Mrs. Wilmington considered the drawing-room too sacred for anything but silk—across the marble of a big console-table, when she saw that something lay on it which was not usually there. It was a square thing like a letter, fastened with a sort of plaited ribbon

of green and white silk, and sealed; and on the end of the ribbon, which hung down about three inches, was another large green seal.

"Look here, Char! How funny!" said Caroline. "It looks awfully old. Written on vellum or something, and the seal's uncle's coat of arms."

"Let's take it to uncle," Charlotte suggested. "Why, what's up?"

Caroline was holding the letter out to her in a hand that shook.

"Look!" she said, and her voice shook too. "Look! The thing's *got our names on it!*"

It had. On the square parchment face were the three names, written in a strange yet readable handwriting, in ink that was faded as with the slow fading of many, many years:—

"To Caroline, Charlotte, and Charles."

"You open it, Caro," said Charlotte; and Charles, who had come across from his favourite mandarin, said, "Yes, Caro; you open it."

It seemed a pity to break the green seals, and they were glad that the plaited silk slipped off easily when the letter was folded a little. But the second green seal had to be broken. The parchment, crackling in Caroline's uncertain hands, was unfolded, and within was writing, lines in that same strange but clear hand, that same dim, faded ink.

"At eight of the clock lean on this marble table and gaze in the mirror, and you shall see and speak with me. But look only in the mirror, uttering no word, and wear the pink verbena stuck behind your ears and the roses on your hearts.—Your kinswoman,

"ELEANOUR."

"Then I didn't spoil it," Charles spoke first, "not even for myself. Because it's addressed to me the same as to you."

"Yes," said Caroline, "you'd better be between us two, though, Charles, and you *must not* look round."

"As if I should think of doing such a thing," said Charles, indignantly.

At five minutes to eight that evening the three C.'s stood in front of the console-table with pink verbena behind their ears and red roses over their hearts. Mrs. Wilmington had "done" the vases in the dining-room that very morning, and, curiously enough, roses and pink verbena were the flowers she had chosen.

"It must be a strong magic to have made her do *that*," said Charlotte; "secrecy and family reunion."

The room was not dark, of course, at that time in the evening; but then it was not quite light either.

The three C.'s, Charles occupying a guarded position in the middle, stood quite still and waited.

And presently, quite surely and certainly, with no nonsense about it, they saw in the looking-glass the door open that led to the uncle's secret staircase. And through it, in trailing velvet, came a lady—the lady of the picture! Her ruff, her coif, her darkly-flashing jewels, her softly-flashing eyes, the children knew them well. Had they not seen them every day for weeks, framed in the old carved frame in the dining-room?

I am sorry to say that Charles at once tried to look round, but his sister's arms about his neck restrained him.

The lady glided to a spot from which she could look straight into the mirror and into the children's eyes.

"I am here," she said, in what Charlotte said afterwards was a starry voice. "Do not move or speak. I have come to you because you have believed in the old and beautiful things. You sought for my books and found them. Also you have tried to use the magic spells to help the poor and needy, and to reconcile them who are at strife. Therefore, you see what you desired to see, and when the flowering time is here you shall have your heart's desire. Do not speak or move, lest you break the spell. I will sing to you. And when the last note dies away, close your eyes and count very slowly twenty-seven, the number of the years on earth of your kinswoman Eleanour."

The beautiful presence moved along the room to the harp; that, too, was in the field of vision bounded by the tarnished gold of the mirror's frame. She seated herself on a chair of faded needlework and drew the golden harp towards her. Then she sang softly in the starry voice that was hers in speaking. The song was in a language that none of them knew (Charles said afterwards that it was Latin, but it was not like any Latin the girls had ever heard). And the music was starry too. And the meaning of the song seemed to be love, and parting, and hope, and noble dreams, and the desire of great and good things; a song that made one very happy and yet made one feel as though one must cry. Softer and softer the voice grew, softer and softer the gentle, resonant tones of the harp. The song ended.

"Now," said the lady. "Farewell!"

The children closed their eyes, Caroline

put her hand over Charles's to "make sure," and so moved was he by the singing and the beautiful mystery of the whole adventure that he hardly wriggled at all. There was a soft rustling sound behind them. Very slowly they all counted from one to twenty-seven. Caroline's hand was clasping Charlotte's, and at the end of the count a long pressure, returned, told each that the other had finished her counting.

They opened their eyes and turned round. The drawing-room was empty. It seemed impossible. Yet it was true.

"It's all over," said Charles.

"But we've seen her," said Caroline.

"We've heard her," said Charlotte.

"Yes," said Charles. "I intend to be perfectly good every minute as long as I live. I wish Rupert had been here. He would never have done anything wrong again either, like he did when——"

"It's very wrong," Charlotte interrupted, "to remember things other people have done wrong. Come on, let's go back to the dining-room. It's lonely here without Her."

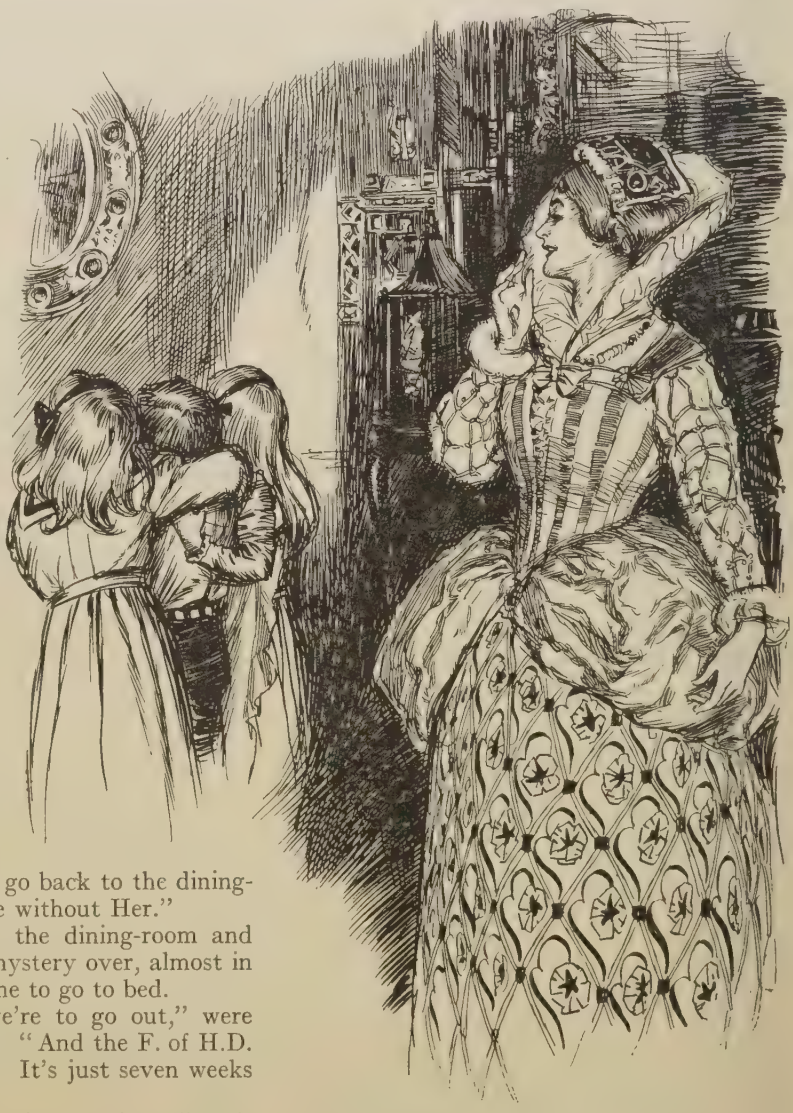
They went back to the dining-room and sat talking the great mystery over, almost in whispers, till it was time to go to bed.

"And to-morrow we're to go out," were Charlotte's last words. "And the F. of H.D. ought to be flowering. It's just seven weeks since we sowed it."

"Of course it is," said Caroline; "don't talk as if you were the only one who remembered it. I say, if you had to say what your heart's desire would be, what would it?"

"To see Her again," said Charlotte, "and hear her starry voice."

Next morning there was a discussion about the curtains the moment the three entered the dining-room. Ought they, or ought they not, to remove the curtains? The girls were for leaving them and putting up garlands every day as long as they stayed in the Manor House. But Charles, who had faithfully put fresh flowers—not always garlanded, it is true, but always flowers—every day during the measles interval, had had enough of it, and said so.



"THE LADY OF THE PICTURE."

"And she's had enough of it, too," he said. "It was to make her come, and she came. She won't come again if you go on garlanding for ever."

The uncle, for a wonder, breakfasted with them. Charles appealed to him.

"We saw her; she did come, her real self,"

he said, "yesterday. So the charm's worked, and we oughtn't to go on garlanding, ought we?"

"You really saw her?" the uncle asked. And was told many things.

"Then," he said, when he had listened to it all, "I think we might draw back the curtains. The magic has been wrought, and now all should be restored to its old state."

"I told you so," said Charles.

"Shall I take down the curtains?" said the uncle. And the three C.'s said "Yes."

He pulled at the green folds, and the curtains and drooping soft flowers of yesterday fell in a mingled heap on the floor. And from the frame, now disclosed, the lady's lips almost smiled on them as her beautiful eyes gazed down on them with a new meaning.

"But she'll never speak to us again," said Caroline, almost in tears.

"Or sing to us," said Charlotte, not very steadily.

"Or tell us to count twenty-seven slowly," said Charles, sniffing a very little.

"But it's something, isn't it," said the uncle, "to have seen her, even if only for once?"

You will understand that anything Mrs. Wilmington might say was powerless to break the charm of so wonderful an adventure. Hollow tales she told of the portrait's having been borrowed for a show of pictures of celebrities who had lived in the neighbourhood, and of the picture being brought back very late the night before, after the servants had gone to bed. Also of a gentleman who told her that Mr. Alphabet sent his love. Also of a lady, a great actress from London, who had taken part in the pageant which was one of the features of Lord Andor's coming-of-age party. "A very nice lady she was, too, dressed up to look the part of the picture, and put down as Dame Eleanour in the programme, which I can show you printed in silver on satin paper."

"I dare say it's true what the Wilmington says," said Caroline, when they were alone; "but it doesn't make any difference. *Our* lady wasn't dressed up to look the part; she *was* the picture. Perhaps our heart's desire *will* turn out to be seeing her again. Let's go and see if the seed has flowered."

It had. In that plot of the terraced garden which the old gardener had marked with the pencilled stick label seven tall, straight stems had shot up, perfect and even in each leaf and stalk, as every plant was which grew in that wonderful soil. And each stem bore only one flower—white and star-shaped, and with a strange, sweet scent.

"I wish Rupert were here," said Charlotte. "We ought to wait for Rupert."

And as she spoke there was Rupert coming to them through the flowers of the lower garden.

"So they've flowered," he said, without any other greeting.

"Yes; and now we're going to eat them and get our heart's desire. Oh, Rupert, I do wish you believed in it all."

"Perhaps I do," said Rupert. "The decent way old Macpherson has behaved while I've been there makes you ready to believe in *anything*."

"Then let's eat them," said Caroline; "one each, and the other three we'll divide as well as we can."

Each plucked a white, starry blossom. The stalks snapped off clean and fresh, like primrose stalks. Then the four put each a hand on the stalk of the fifth flower and broke it between them. And so with the sixth and the seventh. Caroline divided the three flowers with extreme care and accuracy and handed its share to each child. Then, standing in a ring in the sunny garden, the four ate the white flowers. The taste of them was pleasant but strange—something like pineapple and something like flower-artichokes (which have the most mysterious taste in the world); something like spice, and something like the fruit you eat in dreams.

And as they finished eating they heard a foot on the steps of the terrace and turned, and it was the uncle, coming towards them with pale-coloured papers in one hand and a bunch of waxy-white flowers in the other.

Fond as all were of Uncle Charles, no one could feel that the moment was fortunately chosen, and I am sorry to say that Charles voiced to some extent the general feeling when he said, almost audibly, "Oh, bother!"

The uncle came towards them smiling kindly.

"I have come," he said, "to make a presentation to you." He gave to each a white flower. "I have again consulted that entrancing volume of yours, the 'Language of Flowers,' and it tells me that this is the appropriate flower to convey the sentiments with which I approach you."

Everyone said "Thank you very much," and Caroline added, "But what does it mean, uncle?"

"What! Has your book taught you so little?" he asked.

"You see," Caroline kindly explained, "I

don't even know what the name of the flower is; but it's most awfully kind of you, uncle, all the same."

"Oh, the name of the flower?" said the uncle. "It's stephanotis."

"But that means, 'Will you accompany me to the East?'" said Caroline.

"Well," said the uncle, "and will you?"

"To the East?"

"STANDING IN A RING IN THE SUNNY GARDEN, THE FOUR ATE THE WHITE FLOWERS."

"Yes," said the uncle. "Let us sit down on the steps and talk over the idea."

They sat down, and the uncle explained.

"Your finding these books," he said, "has so completely revolutionized my ideas of magic that I cannot complete my book. I must throw it into the melting-pot—re-write it entirely. And to do that I need more knowledge than I have. And I intend to travel, to examine the magic of other lands. The first country I shall visit is India, and it occurred to me that you might like to go with me and visit your parents. I have been corresponding with them by cable," he added, waving the pale-coloured papers, "and your parents are delighted with the idea of the family reunion (pink verbena). We start, if the idea smiles to you, next week."

"Oh, uncle!" was all that anyone could find to say, till Charlotte added, "But what about Rupert?"

"Rupert is to go too," said the uncle—"as far as Suez, where his father will meet him."

"Is father coming home, then?" Rupert asked, breathlessly.

"For a year's leave," said the uncle; "but you haven't any of you answered the stephanotis question yet. Will you accompany me to the East?"

Caroline ran to a flower-bed, and came back with some leaves and flowers, which she thrust into the uncle's hand.

"Small white bell-flower, wood-sorrel, aquilegia," she said. "They mean 'Perfect joy! We love you beyond measure, and Yes, yes, yes!'"

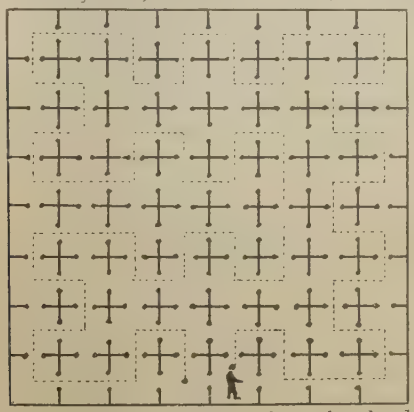
As they turned to go to the house they saw the seven stems on which the white, starry flowers had grown, and suddenly and surely each child saw that the uncle, when he brought them the bunch of pale papers in one hand and the bunch of stephanotis in the other, was really bringing to each child its Heart's Desire.

PERPLEXITIES.

Puzzles and Solutions.

62.—A DUNGEON PUZZLE.

A FRENCH prisoner, for his sins (or other people's), was confined in an underground dungeon containing sixty-four cells, all communicating with open doors, as shown in our illustration. In order to reduce the tedium of his restricted life, he set himself various puzzles, and this is one of them. Starting from the cell in which he is shown, how could he visit every cell once, and only once, and make as many turnings as

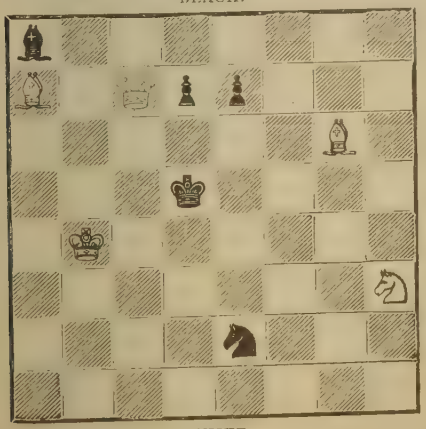


possible? His first attempt is shown by the dotted track. It will be found that there are as many as fifty-five straight lines in his path, but after many attempts he improved upon this. Can you get more than fifty-five? You may end your path in any cell you like. Try the puzzle with a pencil on chessboard diagrams, or you may regard them as rook's moves on a board.

63.—MATE IN TWO.

HERE is a pretty little problem by Dr. Gold, a well-known composer of these chessboard subtleties. White to play and checkmate Black in two moves.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

64.—MRS. TIMPKINS'S AGE.

EDWIN: "Do you know, when the Timpkinses married eighteen years ago Timpkins was three times as old as his wife, and to-day he is just twice as old as she?"

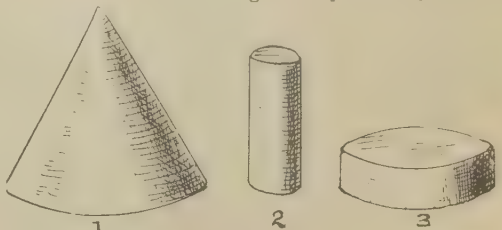
Angelina: "Then how old was Mrs. Timpkins on the wedding day?"

Can you answer Angelina's question?

By Henry E. Dudeney.

65.—THE CONE PUZZLE.

I HAVE a wooden cone, as shown in Fig. 1. How am I to cut out of it the greatest possible cylinder?

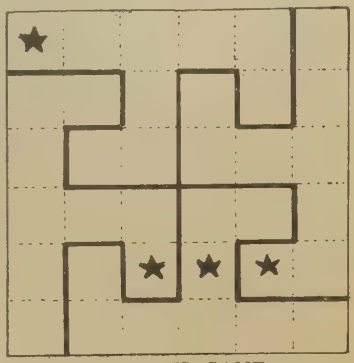


It will be seen that I can cut out one that is long and slender, like Fig. 2, or short and thick, like Fig. 3. But neither is the largest possible. A child could tell you where to cut, if he knew the rule. Can you find this simple rule?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

58.—THE FOUR STARS.

THE diagram explains itself. The dark lines indicate the cuts, which divide the square into four pieces, each of the same size and shape, and each piece containing a star.



59.—ODDS AND EVENS GAME.

IN the case of fifteen matches, the first player can always win if he first takes two. Then, while holding an odd number of matches, he must leave 0, 1, 8, or 9, and when holding an even number, he must leave 4, 5, or 12. This he can always do, and must win. The general solution is too complex and lengthy for this page.

60.—CARD TRIANGLES.

THE following arrangements of the cards show (1) the smallest possible sum, 17; and (2) the largest possible, 23.

```
    1              7
   9 6            4 2
  4   8          3   6
 3 7 5 2        9 5 1 8
```

It will be seen that the two cards in the middle of any side may always be interchanged without affecting the conditions. Thus there are eight ways of presenting every fundamental arrangement. The number of fundamentals is eighteen, as follows: two summing to 17, four summing to 19, six summing to 20, four summing to 21, and two summing to 23. These eighteen fundamentals, multiplied by eight (for the reason stated above) give 144 as the total number of different ways of placing the cards.

61.—A DOMESTIC TRAGEDY.

THE rebus is read as follows: "A small underfed cat (C-eighty) ate up one dark night a large rat under the stairs before tea, and was found on its back over two days afterwards."

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A MOROCCAN SNAKE-CHARMER.

THE snake-charmer at Tangier performs in a corner of the market-place. He allows the snake to seize his tongue and support its whole weight in this manner. He then blows into some straw, which catches fire, and he pretends that the poison from the snake's fangs set the straw alight. He shows the snake's fangs and the two wounds in his own tongue to prove that the fangs have not previously been removed. During the performance an assistant keeps up a deafening noise by beating an instrument resembling a frying-pan.—Dr. C. A. Marsh, 1, Merrifield Terrace, Torpoint R.S.O., Cornwall.

A GIANT PUMPKIN.

THE giant pumpkin in which four-year-old Miss Rolls, of Santa Paula—probably the only lady who ever lived in a pumpkin—is seated in an ordinary child's chair, was raised by Mr. C. C. Teague, manager of the Blanchard ranch, and is particularly wonderful from the fact that on the same vine were twelve others, weighing an average of 180lb. each. As this weighs

230lb., a little figuring shows that there was over a ton of pumpkin on one vine—2,390lb., to be exact. It received no fertilizer or special cultivation. This pumpkin measures 7ft. 8in. around the "waist," stands, as here shown, 3ft. 9in. high, and measures in circumference lengthwise 10ft. 8in.—Mr. John L. Von Blon, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

WHERE MOTORING IS STILL A CRIME.

THE small city of Odder, Denmark, a place of some four thousand inhabitants, still refuses to allow the motor-car to use its roads. Motorists passing through the town have to procure a horse to draw their car through the streets, and those guilty of contraventions of this regulation are heavily fined.—The World's Pictorial News, 12–14, Red Lion Court, E.C.

A NEW USE FOR A MOTOR-CAR.

A CHICAGO man has devised a way to make his motor-car run his houseboat. The rear wheels of the car are connected with the paddle-wheels of the boat, and when the engine is started the craft moves as easily and swiftly as if it were propelled by a turbine engine. The picture reproduced above shows the boat in motion, and the car on the aft deck.—Mr. Robert H. Moulton, 365, East Fifty-Ninth Street, Chicago, Illinois.

MORE CURIOUS THAN COMFORTABLE.

THE Mashukulumbui natives of North-Western Rhodesia have a most wonderful head-dress, which is made up of cuttings of hair from other boys' heads mixed with mud and grease. Sometimes these top-knots are studded with all sorts of curiosities, such as beads, bits of broken crockery, brass paper-fasteners (the latter generally stolen by the native messengers from the Native Commissioner's office), feathers, and so forth. The result, as the photograph shows, forms one of the most curious coiffures in the world.—Miss Elizabeth Goslin, The Boma, Magove, Northern Rhodesia.

HOW THE STEEPLE FELL.

THE three following views show different stages in the demolition of the steeple of the Baptist Church here. The old church being over fifty years old, it was decided to pull it down and rebuild it with bricks, and much excitement was caused as the steeple, which was a hundred and thirty-five feet high, was seen to topple over and crash through the roof of the building to the ground.—Mr. J. R. Black, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada.

WINNING A WAGER.

SOME years ago, when I was studying German in Hanover, an American living in the same flats wagered that he would perform the extraordinary feat shown in the photograph. He placed a cushion on the stone window-coping and, having executed a short-arm balance, placed his feet firmly against the top of the window, finally putting both hands in his pockets. In this position he remained for ten minutes, and so won his bet. It was for only five shillings. As can be gathered from the photograph, there is a drop of ten feet into the stone basement below. The daring performer's hollowed back and the varying light and shade show clearly that his body was actually arched outwards from the window, and that only the firm pressure of his head and feet kept him from falling into the basement. You will notice that both halves of the window were free to swing, and were not fixed in any way. I need hardly add that a crowd soon collected.—Mr. C. E. S. Palmer, British Vice-Consul, Dardanelles, Turkey.

BRIDGE PROBLEM.

(By Wladimir de Rozing.)

Hearts—8.
Diamonds—Knave, 10, 8.
Clubs—9, 7.
Spades—5, 4, 2.

Hearts—2.
Diamonds—6, 5, 2.
Clubs—8, 6, 3, 2.
Spades—8.

A

Z Y

B

Hearts—King, queen, 9, 7.
Diamonds—4.
Clubs—5, 4.
Spades—6, 3.

Hearts—Ace, knave, 10, 6, 5, 4, 3.
Diamonds—None.
Clubs—None.
Spades—King, 7.

No trumps. A has the lead. A and B are to make eight tricks. The solution will be given next month.

ANIMAL DOUBLES.

WE published last month a number of drawings of extraordinary animals, each of which was made up of two other animals, and had a corresponding name which contained within itself each of the separate names. These names readers were left to puzzle out for themselves, but, as promised, we give this month a correct list, with which they may compare their attempts. 1. The Buffalocust. 2. The Sea-urchin-chilla. 3. The Camelion. 4. The Cobracoon. 5. The Flamingorilla. 6. The Gazellephant and the Elephantelope. 7. The Hippopotamouse, the Hippopotamoose, and the Hippopotamussel. 8. The Octopussycat. 9. The Cowl. 10. The Halibutterfly. 11. The Boaconstrictortoise.

SOLUTION TO THE DICKENS MATCH PUZZLE.

LAST month we asked our readers to represent with eight matches the whole of humanity in the immortal and comprehensive language of one of Dickens's leading characters. The solution is as follows, the quotation being from chapter two of "Martin Chuzzlewit":—

"Don't say *we* get drunk, Pa," urged the eldest Miss Pecksniff. "When I say we, my dear," returned her father, "I mean mankind in general; the human race, considered as a body, and not as individuals."

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S BRIDGE PROBLEM.

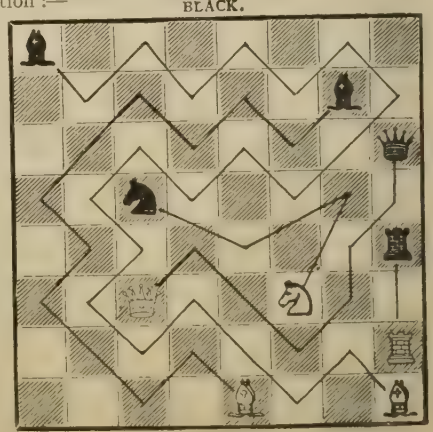
A	Y	B	Z
Spades 3	Spades 7	Spades 8	Spades 6
Spades king	Diamonds 7	Diamonds 5	Diamonds 4
Spades ace	Spades 9	Spades 2	Hearts 5
Spades 5	Spades knave	Spades queen	Hearts 6
Hearts 10	Hearts 8	Spades 10	Diamonds 6
Hearts queen	Hearts 9	Spades 4	Ht. ace or Di. ace
Clubs 4	Diamonds 8	Dia. 10 or Ht. kg.	Di. ace or Ht. ace
Clubs 6	Hearts knave	Ht. kg. or Dia. 10	Clubs knave
Clubs king	Clubs 2	Clubs 5	Clubs queen

The winning card in each trick is underlined.

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S CHESS PROBLEM.

THE problem given last month was for each white man to capture the corresponding black man in such a way that the routes traversed by each man never came in contact with one another. Here is the solution:—

BLACK.



WHITE.

"THE FELLOW GAVE A BELLOW OF ANGER AND SPRANG UPON ME LIKE A TIGER."

(*See page* 606.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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A NEW ADVENTURE OF Sherlock Holmes.

The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax.

By ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

Illustrated by Alec Ball.

"BUT why Turkish?" asked Mr. Sherlock Holmes, gazing fixedly at my boots. I was reclining in a cane-backed chair at the moment, and my protruded feet had attracted his ever-active attention.

"English," I answered, in some surprise. "I got them at Latimer's, in Oxford Street."

Holmes smiled with an expression of weary patience.

"The bath!" he said; "the bath! Why the relaxing and expensive Turkish rather than the invigorating home-made article?"

"Because for the last few days I have been feeling rheumatic and old. A Turkish bath is what we call an alterative in medicine—a fresh starting-point, a cleanser of the system.

"By the way, Holmes," I added, "I have no doubt the connection between my boots and a Turkish bath is a perfectly self-evident one to a logical mind, and yet I should be obliged to you if you would indicate it."

"The train of reasoning is not very obscure, Watson," said Holmes, with a mischievous twinkle. "It belongs to the same elementary class of deduction which I should illustrate if I were to ask you who shared your cab in your drive this morning."

"I don't admit that a fresh illustration is an explanation," said I, with some asperity.

"Bravo, Watson! A very dignified and logical remonstrance. Let me see, what were the points? Take the last one first—the cab. You observe that you have some splashes on the left sleeve and shoulder of your coat. Had you sat in the centre of a hansom you would probably have had no splashes, and if you had they would certainly have been symmetrical. Therefore it is clear that you sat at the side. Therefore it is equally clear that you had a companion."

"That is very evident."

"Absurdly commonplace, is it not?"

"But the boots and the bath?"

"Equally childish. You are in the habit of doing up your boots in a certain way. I see them on this occasion fastened with an elaborate double bow, which is not your usual method of tying them. You have, therefore, had them off. Who has tied them? A bootmaker—or the boy at the bath. It is unlikely that it is the bootmaker, since your boots are nearly new. Well, what remains? The bath. Absurd, is it not? But, for all that, the Turkish bath has served a purpose."

"What is that?"

"You say that you have had it because you need a change. Let me suggest that you take one. How would Lausanne do, my dear Watson—first-class tickets and all expenses paid on a princely scale?"

"Splendid! But why?"

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Holmes leaned back in his armchair and took his notebook from his pocket.

"One of the most dangerous classes in the world," said he, "is the drifting and friendless woman. She is the most harmless, and often the most useful of mortals, but she is the inevitable inciter of crime in others. She is helpless. She is migratory. She has sufficient means to take her from country to country and from hotel to hotel. She is lost, as often as not, in a maze of obscure *pensions* and boarding-houses. She is a stray chicken in a world of foxes. When she is gobbled up she is hardly missed. I much fear that some evil has come to the Lady Frances Carfax."

I was relieved at this sudden descent from the general to the particular. Holmes consulted his notes.

"Lady Frances," he continued, "is the sole survivor of the direct family of the late Earl of Rufton. The estates went, as you may remember, in the male line. She was left with limited means, but with some very remarkable old Spanish jewellery of silver and curiously-cut diamonds to which she was fondly attached—too attached, for she refused to leave it with her banker and always carried it about with her. A rather pathetic figure, the Lady Frances, a beautiful woman, still in fresh middle age, and yet, by a strange chance, the last derelict of what only twenty years ago was a goodly fleet."

"What has happened to her, then?"

"Ah, what has happened to the Lady Frances? Is she alive or dead? There is our problem. She is a lady of precise habits, and for four years it has been her invariable custom to write every second week to Miss Dobney, her old governess, who has long retired, and lives in Camberwell. It is this Miss Dobney who has consulted me. Nearly five weeks have passed without a word. The last letter was from the Hôtel National at Lausanne. Lady Frances seems to have left there and given no address. The family are anxious, and, as they are exceedingly wealthy, no sum will be spared if we can clear the matter up."

"Is Miss Dobney the only source of information? Surely she had other correspondents?"

"There is one correspondent who is a sure draw, Watson. That is the bank. Single ladies must live, and their pass-books are compressed diaries. She banks at Silvester's. I have glanced over her account. The last cheque but one paid her bill at Lausanne, but it was a large one and probably left her with cash in hand. Only one cheque has been drawn since."

"To whom, and where?"

"To Miss Marie Devine. There is nothing to show where the cheque was drawn. It was cashed at the Crédit Lyonnais at Montpelier less than three weeks ago. The sum was fifty pounds."

"And who is Miss Marie Devine?"

"That also I have been able to discover. Miss Marie Devine was the maid of Lady Frances Carfax. Why she should have paid her this cheque we have not yet determined. I have no doubt, however, that your researches will soon clear the matter up."

"*My* researches!"

"Hence the health-giving expedition to Lausanne. You know that I cannot possibly leave London while old Abrahams is in such mortal terror of his life. Besides, on general principles it is best that I should not leave the country. Scotland Yard feels lonely without me, and it causes an unhealthy excitement among the criminal classes. Go, then, my dear Watson, and if my humble counsel can ever be valued at so extravagant a rate as twopence a word, it waits your disposal night and day at the end of the Continental wire."

Two days later found me at the National Hotel at Lausanne, where I received every courtesy at the hands of M. Moser, the well-known manager. Lady Frances, as he informed me, had stayed there for several weeks. She had been much liked by all who met her. Her age was not more than forty. She was still handsome, and bore every sign of having in her youth been a very lovely woman. M. Moser knew nothing of any valuable jewellery, but it had been remarked by the servants that the heavy trunk in the lady's bedroom was always scrupulously locked. Marie Devine, the maid, was as popular as her mistress. She was actually engaged to one of the head waiters in the hotel, and there was no difficulty in getting her address. It was 11, Rue de Trajan, Montpelier. All this I jotted down, and felt that Holmes himself could not have been more adroit in collecting his facts.

Only one corner still remained in the shadow. No light which I possessed could clear up the cause for the lady's sudden departure. She was very happy at Lausanne. There was every reason to believe that she intended to remain for the season in her luxurious rooms overlooking the lake. And yet she had left at a single day's notice, which involved her in the useless payment of a week's rent. Only Jules Vibart, the lover of the maid, had any suggestion to offer,

He connected the sudden departure with the visit to the hotel a day or two before of a tall, dark, bearded man. "*Un sauvage—un véritable sauvage!*" cried Jules Vibart. The man had rooms somewhere in the town. He had been seen talking earnestly to madame on the promenade by the lake. Then he had called. She had refused to see him. He was English, but of his name there was no record. Madame had left the place immediately afterwards. Jules Vibart, and, what was of more importance, Jules Vibart's sweetheart, thought that this call and this departure were cause and effect. Only one thing Jules could not discuss. That was the reason why Marie had left her mistress. Of that he could or would say nothing. If I wished to know, I must go to Montpelier and ask her.

So ended the first chapter of my inquiry. The second was devoted to the place which Lady Frances Carfax had sought when she left Lausanne. Concerning this there had been some secrecy, which confirmed the idea that she had gone with the intention of throwing someone off her track. Otherwise why should not her luggage have been openly labelled for Baden? Both she and it reached the Rhenish spa by some circuitous route. Thus much I gathered from the manager of Cook's local office. So to Baden I went, after dispatching to Holmes an account of all my proceedings, and receiving in reply a telegram of half-humorous commendation.

At Baden the track was not difficult to follow. Lady Frances had stayed at the Englischer Hof for a fortnight. Whilst there she had made the acquaintance of a Dr. Shlessinger and his wife, a missionary from South America. Like most lonely ladies, Lady Frances found her comfort and occupation in religion. Dr. Shlessinger's remarkable personality, his whole-hearted devotion, and the fact that he was recovering from a disease contracted in the exercise of his apostolic duties, affected her deeply. She had helped Mrs. Shlessinger in the nursing of the convalescent saint. He spent his day, as the manager described it to me, upon a lounge-chair on the veranda, with an attendant lady upon either side of him. He was preparing a map of the Holy Land, with special reference to the kingdom of the Midianites, upon which he was writing a monograph. Finally, having improved much in health, he and his wife had returned to London, and Lady Frances had started thither in their company. This was just three weeks before, and the manager had heard nothing since. As to the maid, Marie, she had gone off some days beforehand in floods of tears, after informing the other maids that she was leaving service for ever. Dr. Shlessinger had paid the bill of the whole party before his departure.

"HE SPENT HIS DAY UPON A LOUNGE-CHAIR ON THE VERANDA, WITH AN ATTENDANT LADY UPON EITHER SIDE OF HIM."

"By the way," said the landlord, in con-

clusion, "you are not the only friend of Lady Frances Carfax who is inquiring after her just now. Only a week or so ago we had a man here upon the same errand."

"Did he give a name?" I asked.

"None; but he was an Englishman, though of an unusual type."

"A savage?" said I, linking my facts after the fashion of my illustrious friend.

"Exactly. That describes him very well. He is a bulky, bearded, sunburned fellow, who looks as if he would be more at home in a farmers' inn than in a fashionable hotel. A hard, fierce man, I should think, and one whom I should be sorry to offend."

Already the mystery began to define itself, as figures grow clearer with the lifting of a fog. Here was this good and pious lady pursued from place to place by a sinister and unrelenting figure. She feared him, or she would not have fled from Lausanne. He had still followed. Sooner or later he would overtake her. Had he already overtaken her? Was *that* the secret of her continued silence? Could the good people who were her companions not screen her from his violence or his blackmail? What horrible purpose, what deep design, lay behind this long pursuit? There was the problem which I had to solve.

To Holmes I wrote showing how rapidly and surely I had got down to the roots of the matter. In reply I had a telegram asking for a description of Dr. Shlessinger's left ear. Holmes's ideas of humour are strange and occasionally offensive, so I took no notice of his ill-timed jest—indeed, I had already reached Montpelier in my pursuit of the maid, Marie, before his message came.

I had no difficulty in finding the ex-servant and in learning all that she could tell me. She was a devoted creature, who had only left her mistress because she was sure that she was in good hands, and because her own approaching marriage made a separation inevitable in any case. Her mistress had, as she confessed with distress, shown some irritability of temper towards her during their stay in Baden, and had even questioned her once as if she had suspicions of her honesty, and this had made the parting easier than it would otherwise have been. Lady Frances had given her fifty pounds as a wedding-present. Like me, Marie viewed with deep distrust the stranger who had driven her mistress from Lausanne. With her own eyes she had seen him seize the lady's wrist with great violence on the public promenade by the lake. He was a fierce and terrible man. She believed that it was out of dread of him that Lady Frances had accepted the escort of the Shlessingers to London. She had never spoken to Marie about it, but many little signs had convinced the maid that her mistress lived in a state of continual nervous apprehension. So far she had got in her narrative, when suddenly she sprang from her chair and her face was convulsed with surprise and fear. "See!" she cried. "The miscreant follows still! There is the very man of whom I speak."

Through the open sitting-room window I saw a huge, swarthy man with a bristling black beard walking slowly down the centre of the street and staring eagerly at the numbers of the houses. It was clear that, like myself, he was on the track of the maid. Acting upon the impulse of the moment, I rushed out and accosted him.

"You are an Englishman," I said.

"What if I am?" he asked, with a most villainous scowl.

"May I ask what your name is?"

"No, you may not," said he, with decision.

The situation was awkward, but the most direct way is often the best.

"Where is the Lady Frances Carfax?" I asked.

He stared at me in amazement.

"What have you done with her? Why have you pursued her? I insist upon an answer!" said I.

The fellow gave a bellow of anger and sprang upon me like a tiger. I have held my own in many a struggle, but the man had a grip of iron and the fury of a fiend. His hand was on my throat and my senses were nearly gone before an unshaven French *ouvrier*, in a blue blouse, darted out from a *cabaret* opposite, with a cudgel in his hand, and struck my assailant a sharp crack over the forearm, which made him leave go his hold. He stood for an instant fuming with rage and uncertain whether he should not renew his attack. Then, with a snarl of anger, he left me and entered the cottage from which I had just come. I turned to thank my preserver, who stood beside me in the roadway.

"Well, Watson," said he, "a very pretty hash you have made of it! I rather think you had better come back with me to London by the night express."

An hour afterwards Sherlock Holmes, in his usual garb and style, was seated in my private room at the hotel. His explanation of his sudden and opportune appearance was simplicity itself, for, finding that he could get away from London, he determined to head

me off at the next obvious point of my travels. In the disguise of a working-man he had sat in the *cabaret* waiting for my appearance.

"And a singularly consistent investigation you have made, my dear Watson," said he. "I cannot at the moment recall any possible blunder which you have omitted. The total effect of your proceedings has been to give the alarm everywhere and yet to discover nothing."

"Perhaps you would have done no better," I answered, bitterly.

"There is no 'perhaps' about it. I *have* done better. Here is the Hon. Philip Green, who is a fellow-lodger with you in this hotel, and we may find in him the starting-point for a more successful investigation."

A card had come up on a salver, and it was followed by the same bearded ruffian who had attacked me in the street. He started when he saw me.

"What is this, Mr. Holmes?" he asked. "I had your note and I have come. But what has this man to do with the matter?"

"This is my old friend and associate, Dr. Watson, who is helping us in this affair."

The stranger held out a huge, sunburned hand, with a few words of apology.

"I hope I didn't harm you. When you accused me of hurting her I lost my grip of myself. Indeed, I'm not responsible in these days. My nerves are like live wires. But this situation is beyond me. What I want to know, in the first place, Mr. Holmes, is, how in the world you came to hear of my existence at all."

"I am in touch with Miss Dobney, Lady Frances's governess."

"Old Susan Dobney with the mob cap! I remember her well."

"And she remembers you. It was in the days before—before you found it better to go to South Africa."

"Ah, I see you know my whole story. I need hide nothing from you. I swear to you, Mr. Holmes, that there never was in this world a man who loved a woman with a more whole-hearted love than I had for Frances. I was a wild youngster, I know—not worse than others of my class. But her mind was pure as snow. She could not bear a shadow of coarseness. So, when she came to hear of things that I had done, she would have no more to say to me. And yet she loved me—that is the wonder of it!—loved me well enough to remain single all her sainted days just for my sake alone. When the years had passed and I had made my money at Barberton I thought perhaps I could seek her out and soften her. I had heard that she was still unmarried. I found her at Lausanne, and tried all I knew. She weakened, I think, but her will was strong, and when next I called she had left the town. I traced her to Baden, and then after a time heard that her maid was here. I'm a rough fellow, fresh from a rough life, and when Dr. Watson spoke to me as he did I lost hold of myself for a moment. But for God's sake tell me what has become of the Lady Frances."

"That is for us to find out," said Sherlock Holmes, with peculiar gravity. "What is your London address, Mr. Green?"

"The Langham Hotel will find me."

"Then may I recommend that you return there and be on hand in case I should want you? I have no desire to encourage false hopes, but you may rest assured that all that can be done will be done for the safety of Lady Frances. I can say no more for the instant. I will leave you this card so that you may be able to keep in touch with us. Now, Watson, if you will pack your bag I will cable to Mrs. Hudson to make one of her best efforts for two hungry travellers at seven-thirty to-morrow."

A telegram was awaiting us when we reached our Baker Street rooms, which Holmes read with an exclamation of interest and threw across to me. "Jagged or torn" was the message, and the place of origin Baden.

"What is this?" I asked.

"It is everything," Holmes answered. "You may remember my seemingly irrelevant question as to this clerical gentleman's left ear. You did not answer it."

"I had left Baden, and could not inquire."

"Exactly. For this reason I sent a duplicate to the manager of the Englischer Hof, whose answer lies here."

"What does it show?"

"It shows, my dear Watson, that we are dealing with an exceptionally astute and dangerous man. The Rev. Dr. Shlessinger, missionary from South America, is none other than Holy Peters, one of the most unscrupulous rascals that Australia has ever evolved—and for a young country it has turned out some very finished types. His particular speciality is the beguiling of lonely ladies by playing upon their religious feelings, and his so-called wife, an Englishwoman named Fraser, is a worthy helpmate. The nature of his tactics suggested his identity to me, and this physical peculiarity—he was badly bitten in a saloon-fight at Adelaide in

'89—confirmed my suspicion. This poor lady is in the hands of a most infernal couple, who will stick at nothing, Watson. That she is already dead is a very likely supposition. If not, she is undoubtedly in some sort of confinement, and unable to write to Miss Dobney or her other friends. It is always possible that she never reached London, or that she has passed through it, but the former is improbable, as, with their system of registration, it is not easy for foreigners to play tricks with the Continental police; and the latter is also unlikely, as these rogues could not hope to find any other place where it would be as easy to keep a person under restraint. All my instincts tell me that she is in London, but, as we have at present no possible means of telling where, we can only take the obvious steps, eat our dinner, and possess our souls in patience. Later in the evening I will stroll down and have a word with friend Lestrade at Scotland Yard."

But neither the official police nor Holmes's own small, but very efficient, organization sufficed to clear away the mystery. Amid the crowded millions of London the three persons we sought were as completely obliterated as if they had never lived. Advertisements were tried, and failed. Clues were followed, and led to nothing. Every criminal resort which Shlessinger might frequent was drawn in vain. His old associates were watched, but they kept clear of him. And then suddenly, after a week of helpless suspense, there came a flash of light. A silver-and-brilliant pendant of old Spanish design had been pawned at Bevington's, in Westminster Road. The pawner was a large, clean-shaven man of clerical appearance. His name and address were demonstrably false. The ear had escaped notice, but the description was surely that of Shlessinger.

Three times had our bearded friend from the Langham called for news—the third time within an hour of this fresh development. His clothes were getting looser on his great body. He seemed to be wilting away in his anxiety. "If you will only give me something to do!" was his constant wail. At last Holmes could oblige him.

"He has begun to pawn the jewels. We should get him now."

"But does this mean that any harm has befallen the Lady Frances?"

Holmes shook his head very gravely.

"Supposing that they have held her prisoner up to now, it is clear that they cannot let her loose without their own destruction. We must prepare for the worst."

"What can I do?"

"These people do not know you by sight?"

"No."

"It is possible that he will go to some other pawnbroker in the future. In that case, we must begin again. On the other hand, he has had a fair price and no questions asked, so if he is in need of ready-money he will probably come back to Bevington's. I will give you a note to them, and they will let you wait in the shop. If the fellow comes you will follow him home. But no indiscretion, and, above all, no violence. I put you on your honour that you will take no step without my knowledge and consent."

For two days the Hon. Philip Green (he was, I may mention, the son of the famous admiral of that name who commanded the Sea of Azof fleet in the Crimean War) brought us no news. On the evening of the third he rushed into our sitting-room pale, trembling, with every muscle of his powerful frame quivering with excitement.

"We have him! We have him!" he cried.

He was incoherent in his agitation. Holmes soothed him with a few words, and thrust him into an armchair.

"Come, now, give us the order of events," said he.

"She came only an hour ago. It was the wife, this time, but the pendant she brought was the fellow of the other. She is a tall, pale woman, with ferret eyes."

"That is the lady," said Holmes.

"She left the office and I followed her. She walked up the Kennington Road, and I kept behind her. Presently she went into a shop. Mr. Holmes, it was an undertaker's."

My companion started. "Well?" he asked, in that vibrant voice which told of the fiery soul behind the cold, grey face.

"She was talking to the woman behind the counter. I entered as well. 'It is late,' I heard her say, or words to that effect. The woman was excusing herself. 'It should be there before now,' she answered. 'It took longer, being out of the ordinary.' They both stopped and looked at me, so I asked some question and then left the shop."

"You did excellently well. What happened next?"

"The woman came out, but I had hid myself in a doorway. Her suspicions had been aroused, I think, for she looked round her. Then she called a cab and got in. I was lucky enough to get another and so to follow her. She got down at last at No. 36, Poultney Square, Brixton. I drove past,

"'WE HAVE HIM! WE HAVE HIM!' HE CRIED."

left my cab at the corner of the square, and watched the house."

"Did you see anyone?"

"The windows were all in darkness save one on the lower floor. The blind was down, and I could not see in. I was standing there, wondering what I should do next, when a covered van drove up with two men in it. They descended, took something out of the van, and carried it up the steps to the hall door. Mr. Holmes, it was a coffin."

"Ah!"

"For an instant I was on the point of rushing in. The door had been opened to admit the men and their burden. It was the woman who had opened it. But as I stood there she caught a glimpse of me, and I think that she recognized me. I saw her start, and she hastily closed the door. I remembered my promise to you, and here I am."

"You have done excellent work," said Holmes, scribbling a few words upon a half-sheet of paper. "We can do nothing legal without a warrant, and you can serve the cause best by taking this note down to the authorities and getting one. There may be some difficulty, but I should think that the sale of the jewellery should be sufficient. Lestrade will see to all details."

"But they may murder her in the meanwhile. What could the coffin mean, and for whom could it be but for her?"

"We will do all that can be done, Mr. Green. Not a moment will be lost. Leave it in our hands. Now, Watson," he added, as our client hurried away, "he will set the regular forces on the move. We are, as usual, the irregulars, and we must take our own line of action. The situation strikes me as so desperate that the most extreme measures are justified. Not a moment is to be lost in getting to Poultney Square.

"Let us try to reconstruct the situation," said he, as we drove swiftly past the Houses of Parliament and over Westminster Bridge. "These villains have coaxed this unhappy lady to London, after first alienating her from her faithful maid. If she has written any letters they have been intercepted. Through some confederate they have engaged a furnished house. Once inside it, they have made her a prisoner, and they have become possessed of the valuable jewellery which has been their object from the first. Already they have begun to sell part of it, which seems safe enough to them, since they have no reason to think that anyone is interested in the lady's fate. When she is released she will, of course, denounce them. Therefore, she must not be released. But they cannot keep her under lock and key for ever. So murder is their only solution."

"That seems very clear."

"Now we will take another line of reasoning. When you follow two separate chains of thought, Watson, you will find some point of intersection which should approximate to the truth. We will start now, not from the lady, but from the coffin, and argue backwards. That incident proves, I fear, beyond all doubt that the lady is dead. It points also to an orthodox burial with proper accompaniment of medical certificate and official sanction. Had the lady been obviously murdered, they would have buried her in a hole in the back garden. But here all is open and regular. What does that mean? Surely that they have done her to death in some way which has deceived the doctor, and simulated a natural end—poisoning, perhaps. And yet how strange that they should ever let a doctor approach her unless he were a confederate, which is hardly a credible proposition."

"Could they have forged a medical certificate?"

"Dangerous, Watson, very dangerous. No, I hardly see them doing that. Pull up, cabby! This is evidently the undertaker's, for we have just passed the pawnbroker's. Would you go in, Watson? Your appearance inspires confidence. Ask what hour the Poultney Square funeral takes place tomorrow."

The woman in the shop answered me without hesitation that it was to be at eight o'clock in the morning.

"You see, Watson, no mystery; everything above-board! In some way the legal forms have undoubtedly been complied with, and they think that they have little to fear. Well, there's nothing for it now but a direct frontal attack. Are you armed?"

"My stick!"

"Well, well, we shall be strong enough. 'Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just.' We simply can't afford to wait for the police, or to keep within the four corners of the law. You can drive off, cabby. Now, Watson, we'll just take our luck together, as we have occasionally done in the past."

He had rung loudly at the door of a great dark house in the centre of Poultney Square. It was opened immediately, and the figure of a tall woman was outlined against the dim-lit hall.

"Well, what do you want?" she asked, sharply, peering at us through the darkness.

"I want to speak to Dr. Shlessinger," said Holmes.

"There is no such person here," she answered, and tried to close the door, but Holmes had jammed it with his foot.

"Well, I want to see the man who lives here, whatever he may call himself," said Holmes, firmly.

She hesitated. Then she threw open the door. "Well, come in!" said she. "My husband is not afraid to face any man in the world." She closed the door behind us, and showed us into a sitting-room on the right side of the hall, turning up the gas as she left us. "Mr. Peters will be with you in an instant," she said.

Her words were literally true, for we had hardly time to look round the dusty and moth-eaten apartment in which we found ourselves before the door opened and a big, clean-shaven, bald-headed man stepped lightly into the room. He had a large red face, with pendulous cheeks, and a general air of superficial benevolence which was marred by a cruel, vicious mouth.

"There is surely some mistake here, gentlemen," he said, in an unctuous, make-everything-easy voice. "I fancy that you have been misdirected. Possibly if you tried farther down the street——"

"That will do; we have no time to waste," said my companion, firmly. "You are Henry Peters, of Adelaide, late the Rev. Dr. Shlessinger, of Baden and South America. I am as sure of that as that my own name is Sherlock Holmes."

Peters, as I will now call him, started and stared hard at his formidable pursuer. "I guess your name does not frighten me, Mr. Holmes," said he, coolly. "When a man's conscience is easy you can't rattle him. What is your business in my house?"

"I want to know what you have done with the Lady Frances Carfax, whom you brought away with you from Baden."

"I'd be very glad if you could tell me where that lady may be," Peters answered, coolly. "I've a bill against her for nearly a hundred pounds, and nothing to show for it but a couple of trumpery pendants that the dealer would hardly look at. She attached herself to Mrs. Peters and me at Baden (it is a fact that I was using another name at the time), and she stuck on to us until we came to London. I paid her bill and her ticket. Once in London, she gave us the slip, and, as I say, left these out-of-date jewels to pay her bills. You find her, Mr. Holmes, and I'm your debtor."

"I *mean* to find her," said Sherlock Holmes. "I'm going through this house till I do find her."

"Where is your warrant?"

Holmes half drew a revolver from his pocket. "This will have to serve till a better one comes."

"Why, you are a common burglar."

"So you might describe me," said Holmes, cheerfully. "My companion is also a dangerous ruffian. And together we are going through your house."

Our opponent opened the door.

"Fetch a policeman, Annie!" said he.

"HOLMES HALF DREW A REVOLVER FROM HIS POCKET."

There was a whisk of feminine skirts down the passage, and the hall door was opened and shut.

"Our time is limited, Watson," said Holmes. "If you try to stop us, Peters, you will most certainly get hurt. Where is that coffin which was brought into your house?"

"What do you want with the coffin? It is in use. There is a body in it."

"I must see that body."

"Never with my consent."

"Then without it." With a quick move-

ment Holmes pushed the fellow to one side and passed into the hall. A door half open stood immediately before us. We entered. It was the dining-room. On the table, under a half-lit chandelier, the coffin was lying. Holmes turned up the gas and raised the lid. Deep down in the recesses of the coffin lay an emaciated figure. The glare from the lights above beat down upon an aged and withered face. By no possible process of cruelty, starvation, or disease could this worn-out wreck be the still beautiful Lady Frances. Holmes's face showed his amazement, and also his relief.

"Thank God!" he muttered. "It's someone else."

"Ah, you've blundered badly for once, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Peters, who had followed us into the room.

"Who is this dead woman?"

"Well, if you really must know, she is an old nurse of my wife's, Rose Spender her name, whom we found in the Brixton Workhouse Infirmary. We brought her round here, called in Dr. Horsom, of 13, Firbank Villas—mind you take the address, Mr. Holmes—and had her carefully tended, as Christian folk should. On the third day she died—certificate says senile decay—but that's only the doctor's opinion, and, of course, you know better. We ordered her funeral to be carried out by Stimson and Co., of the Kennington Road, who will bury her at nine o'clock to-morrow morning. Can you pick any hole in that, Mr. Holmes? You've made a silly blunder, and you may as well own up to it. I'd give something for a photograph of your gaping, staring face when you pulled aside that lid expecting to see the Lady Frances Carfax, and only found a poor old woman of ninety."

Holmes's expression was as impassive as ever under the jeers of his antagonist, but his clenched hands betrayed his acute annoyance.

"I am going through your house," said he.

"Are you, though!" cried Peters, as a woman's voice and heavy steps sounded in the passage. "We'll soon see about that. This way, officers, if you please. These men have forced their way into my house, and I cannot get rid of them. Help me to put them out."

A sergeant and a constable stood in the doorway. Holmes drew his card from his case.

"This is my name and address. This is my friend, Dr. Watson."

"Bless you, sir, we know you very well," said the sergeant, "but you can't stay here without a warrant."

"Of course not. I quite understand that."

"Arrest him!" cried Peters.

"We know where to lay our hands on this gentleman if he is wanted," said the sergeant, majestically, "but you'll have to go, Mr. Holmes."

"Yes, Watson, we shall have to go."

A minute later we were in the street once more. Holmes was as cool as ever, but I was hot with anger and humiliation. The sergeant had followed us.

"Sorry, Mr. Holmes, but that's the law."

"Exactly, sergeant; you could not do otherwise."

"I expect there was good reason for your presence there. If there is anything I can do——"

"It's a missing lady, sergeant, and we think she is in that house. I expect a warrant presently."

"Then I'll keep my eye on the parties, Mr. Holmes. If anything comes along, I will surely let you know."

It was only nine o'clock, and we were off full cry upon the trail at once. First we drove to Brixton Workhouse Infirmary, where we found that it was indeed the truth that a charitable couple had called some days before, that they had claimed an imbecile old woman as a former servant, and that they had obtained permission to take her away with them. No surprise was expressed at the news that she had since died.

The doctor was our next goal. He had been called in, had found the woman dying of pure senility, had actually seen her pass away, and had signed the certificate in due form. "I assure you that everything was perfectly normal and there was no room for foul play in the matter," said he. Nothing in the house had struck him as suspicious, save that for people of their class it was remarkable that they should have no servant. So far and no farther went the doctor.

Finally, we found our way to Scotland Yard. There had been difficulties of procedure in regard to the warrant. Some delay was inevitable. The magistrate's signature might not be obtained until next morning. If Holmes would call about nine he could go down with Lestrade and see it acted upon. So ended the day, save that near midnight our friend, the sergeant, called to say that he had seen flickering lights here and there in the windows of the great dark house, but that no one had left it and none had entered. We could but pray for patience, and wait for the morrow.

Sherlock Holmes was too irritable for

conversation and too restless for sleep. I left him smoking hard, with his heavy, dark brows knotted together, and his long, nervous fingers tapping upon the arms of his chair, as he turned over in his mind every possible solution of the mystery. Several times in the course of the night I heard him prowling about the house. Finally, just after I had been called in the morning, he rushed into my room. He was in his dressing-gown, but his pale, hollow-eyed face told me that his night had been a sleepless one.

"What time was the funeral? Eight, was it not?" he asked, eagerly. "Well, it is seven-twenty now. Good heavens, Watson, what has become of any brains that God has given me? Quick, man, quick! It's life or death—a hundred chances on death to one on life. I'll never forgive myself, never, if we are too late!"

Five minutes had not passed before we were flying in a hansom down Baker Street. But even so it was twenty-five to eight as we passed Big Ben, and eight struck as we tore down the Brixton Road. But others were late as well as we. Ten minutes after the hour the hearse was still standing at the door of the house, and even as our foaming horse came to a halt the coffin, supported by three men, appeared on the threshold. Holmes darted forward and barred their way.

"Take it back!" he cried, laying his hand on the breast of the foremost. "Take it back this instant!"

"What the devil do you mean? Once again I ask you, where is your warrant?" shouted the furious Peters, his big red face glaring over the farther end of the coffin.

"The warrant is on its way. This coffin shall remain in the house until it comes."

The authority in Holmes's voice had its effect upon the bearers. Peters had suddenly vanished into the house, and they obeyed these new orders. "Quick, Watson, quick! Here is a screw-driver!" he shouted, as the coffin was replaced upon the table. "Here's one for you, my man! A sovereign if the lid comes off in a minute! Ask no questions—work away! That's good! Another! And another! Now pull all together! It's giving! It's giving! Ah, that does it at last!"

With a united effort we tore off the coffin-lid. As we did so there came from the inside a stupefying and overpowering smell of chloroform. A body lay within, its head all wreathed in cotton-wool, which had been soaked in the narcotic. Holmes plucked it off and disclosed the statuesque face of a handsome and spiritual woman of middle age. In an instant he had passed his arm round the figure and raised her to a sitting position.

"Is she gone, Watson? Is there a spark left? Surely we are not too late!"

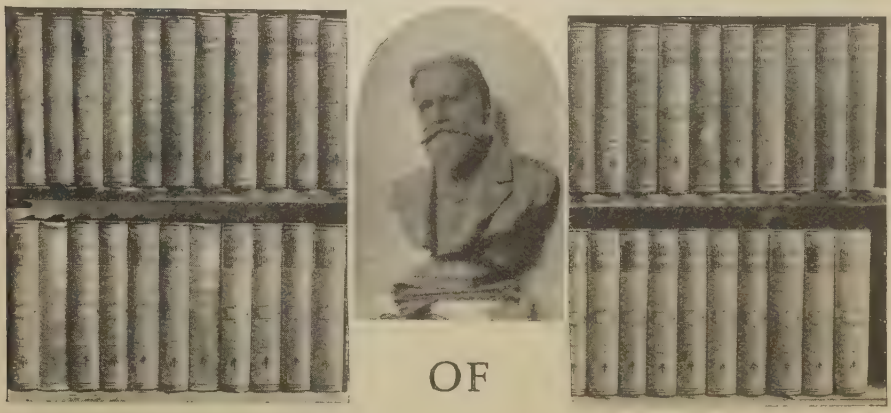
For half an hour it seemed that we were. What with actual suffocation, and what with the poisonous fumes of the chloroform, the Lady Frances seemed to have passed the last point of recall. And then, at last, with artificial respiration, with injected ether, with every device that science could suggest, some flutter of life, some quiver of the eyelids, some dimming of a mirror, spoke of the slowly returning life. A cab had driven up, and Holmes, parting the blind, looked out at it. "Here is Lestrade with his warrant," said he. "He will find that his birds have flown. And here," he added, as a heavy step hurried along the passage, "is someone who has a better right to nurse this lady than we have. Good morning, Mr. Green; I think that the sooner we can move the Lady Frances the better. Meanwhile, the funeral may proceed, and the poor old woman who still lies in that coffin may go to her last resting-place alone."

"Should you care to add the case to your annals, my dear Watson," said Holmes that evening, "it can only be as an example of that temporary eclipse to which even the best-balanced mind may be exposed. Such slips are common to all mortals, and the greatest is he who can recognize and repair them. To this modified credit I may, perhaps, make some claim. My night was haunted by the thought that somewhere a clue, a strange sentence, a curious observation, had come under my notice and had been too easily dismissed. Then, suddenly, in the grey of the morning, the words came back to me. It was the remark of the undertaker's wife, as reported by Philip Green. She had said, 'It should be there before now. It took longer, being out of the ordinary.' It was the coffin of which she spoke. It had been out of the ordinary. That could only mean that it had been made to some special measurement. But why? Why? Then in an instant I remembered the deep sides, and the little wasted figure at the bottom. Why so large a coffin for so small a body? To leave room for another body. Both would be buried under the one certificate. It had all been so clear, if only my own sight had not been dimmed. At eight the Lady Frances would be buried. Our one chance was to stop the coffin before it left the house.

"It was a desperate chance that we might find her alive, but it *was* a chance, as the result showed. These people had never, to my knowledge, done a murder. They might shrink from actual violence at the last. They could bury her with no sign of how she met her end, and even if she were exhumed there was a chance for them. I hoped that such considerations might prevail with them. You can reconstruct the scene well enough. You saw the horrible den upstairs, where the poor lady had been kept so long. They rushed in and overpowered her with their chloroform, carried her down, poured more into the coffin to insure against her wakening, and then screwed down the lid. A clever device, Watson. It is new to me in the annals of crime. If our ex-missionary friends escape the clutches of Lestrade, I shall expect to hear of some brilliant incidents in their future career."

"HOLMES DARTED FORWARD AND BARRED THEIR WAY."

The Twenty-First Birthday



OF

"The Strand Magazine."

WITH this number THE STRAND MAGAZINE completes the twenty-first year of its existence, and so attains its majority. As in human affairs this is the occasion of much rejoicing and congratulation amongst friends and relations, so we may be pardoned in thinking our world of readers felicitates us in having surmounted the dangers and survived the perils of infancy and youth, and wishes us a continued health and prosperity.

When, towards the close of 1890, the late Sir George Newnes launched into the world what has now become amongst the oldest of the illustrated monthlies, he wrote modestly yet confidently on its first page :—

" It is believed that THE STRAND MAGAZINE will soon occupy a position which will justify its existence."

That these words were not vain a review of what THE STRAND has accomplished in its twenty-one years, the vast amount of entertainment it has furnished, the many characters, real and fictitious, first introduced to the world in its pages, the praise it has won from eminent persons, the estimation in which through forty-two volumes it has been held by the public in Britain and America, sufficiently prove.

We may be pardoned for recalling that it was read each month from cover to cover by characters so diverse as the late Queen Victoria and Cardinal Manning. A great traveller, Sir Harry Johnston, declared that he found it had penetrated into the most remote parts of the world. Queen Margherita of Italy has said that it was the only English periodical she read ; and Mr. Swinburne once applied to this magazine the happy pun (one of the greatest compliments, by the way, we have ever received), *Litus delectabile semper* — " The ever-delightful STRAND."

Looking backward now from this vantage-point of our twenty-first birthday, one may pass an entertaining quarter of an hour in reviewing some of the more notable features of the career of this magazine. If the first number would attract little attention now, it is because the standard then set by THE STRAND has become a universal one.

In the matter of illustrations, for instance, we seemed to be embarking upon the wildest extravagance in furnishing no fewer than a hundred and ten in a single number, for it must be remembered that this was before the general adoption of process engraving, and many of THE STRAND'S illustrations were cut on wood. In subsequent numbers many more pictures than this appeared. The novelty of such a series as the " Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of Their Lives " appealed enormously to the public, because portraits of celebrities were then comparatively rare. There were then no picture-postcards, and a photograph of a popular statesman, actress, or author usually cost a couple of shillings. In that first number chronological likenesses were given of Tennyson, Swinburne, Spurgeon, Henry Irving,

Sir John Lubbock (now Lord Avebury), Miss Ellen Terry, Professor Blackie, and Mr. Rider Haggard.

Of that list but three survive.

In the first number appeared a "story for children"—a feature which has continued down to this day without a single break. In this department we have had the pleasure of publishing some of the most charming work of its kind ever written. The delightful stories by E. Nesbit are known to English-speaking children all over the world, and are without rival in their power of depicting real children amid fantastic surroundings.

We cannot pass the second number without recalling that amongst the stories it contained was one—"Slap-Bang"—which Sir George Newnes declared was the very best he had ever read, and this opinion of so experienced a judge was probably shared by his readers. This was a translation from the French. THE STRAND has always made a point of taking good stories, in whatever language they were written. An example will be found in "The Mysterious Island" in the present number.

ILLUSTRATION TO THE STORY "SLAP-BANG," WHICH APPEARED IN THE SECOND NUMBER OF "THE STRAND MAGAZINE," AND WHICH THE LATE SIR GEORGE NEWNES CONSIDERED THE BEST STORY HE HAD EVER READ.

The symposium of eminent persons has always been a prominent feature of the magazine, the first, which appeared in No. 2, being concerned with "Ladies' Dress," to which a number of famous artists, including the late Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A., contributed. The latest, which appears on another page, on "The Ten Greatest Living Men," will be found to be one of the most interesting of the series.

Our third number introduced that witty and piquant caricaturist, "F. C. G.," to a wider public than he had hitherto enjoyed, his success in these pages being so great that when, a few years later, the founder of this magazine founded also the *Westminster Gazette*, he engaged Mr. (now Sir Francis) Carruthers Gould to adorn its columns. The subject, it is interesting to recall, of that first article was "The Decay of Humour in the House of Commons," the letterpress being supplied by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Lucy. In the next number Sir Wilfrid Lawson, M.P., whose own humour never decayed, wrote his souvenirs of the temperance movement, under the title "On the Stump for the Pump." In the same month there appeared in THE STRAND a short story, "The King's Stratagem," by an author, Stanley G. Weyman, who probably then never contemplated embarking upon a series of romances, with old France as a *milieu*, which this very story may have suggested, and which have since rendered him world-famous. Another writer whose story, "The Notorious Mrs. Anstruther," appeared about the same time was then a youth of four and twenty, and himself far from notorious. Since that time the name of Mr. E. W. Hornung has become universally known as the author of "Raffles" and the "Stingaree Stories," the latter of which first appeared in this magazine.

Another noteworthy detail of the early numbers of the magazine was a page or two of capital pictorial puzzles—"Pal's Puzzles," the "Pal" being Mr. Jean Paleologue, who possessed a genuine gift in this direction. We have heard the story of one eminent philosopher who did not disdain to spend an hour in an endeavour to "find the pig" in one of "Pal's" landscapes, and triumphed like a child in the complete success which crowned

"PAL'S PUZZLES": FIND THEIR LORDS—THIS WAS THE FIRST OF THE SERIES OF ALL KINDS OF PUZZLES FOR WHICH "THE STRAND" HAS BEEN CELEBRATED EVER SINCE.

his efforts. Puzzles of all kinds have been a prominent feature of the magazine ever since.

It was not, however, until No. 7 appeared that a really signal and important incident happened. For when that number was on the bookstalls a character in fiction ranking amongst the highest, and destined probably to immortality, made his bow to STRAND readers. We refer to Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the vehicle of his appearance being the short story, "A Scandal in Bohemia." It did not take the public long to recognize the qualities of this master detective, whose methods were so much more surprising and subtle, scientific and human, than any creation of Sue or Gaboriau. Amongst the first of Sherlock's appreciators was Mr. Swinburne, who never failed to read with delight each adventure as it appeared; and it was not long before Holmes and Watson and their creator were closely and firmly associated with THE STRAND, an association which has continued for twenty years.

Bret Harte was also a contributor in those early days, as were "Rita," Manville Fenn, and Mrs. W. K. Clifford. No. 12 contained a rare literary treat in an unpublished letter of Charles Lamb to his friend Chambers, which was commented upon in the literary periodicals of the time. With the fourteenth number began the connection of Mr. J. A. Shepherd with this magazine, in a series of humorous drawings entitled "The Doll and the Raven; or, A Fatal Smile." These two pages at once stamped this young draughtsman—he was then four and twenty—as one of the cleverest of his day, and his subsequent "Zigzags from the Zoo," which he produced in conjunction with Mr. Arthur Morrison, made him world-famous. Two years later he was invited to join the staff of *Punch*.

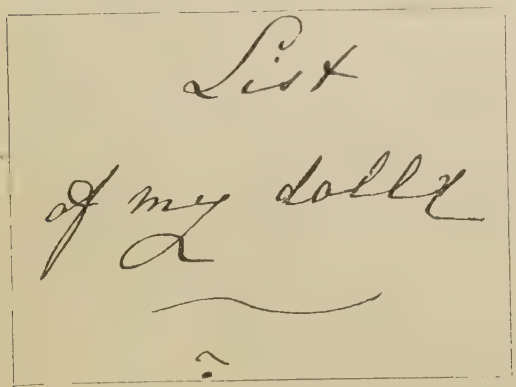
Both Grant Allen and Lord Avebury, in numerous articles in THE STRAND, did a great deal towards interesting the general reader in the beauties and wonders of Nature, the first-

"THE DOLL AND THE RAVEN; OR, A FATAL SMILE"—THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF MR. J. A. SHEPHERD IN OUR PAGES.

The Senior United Service. The Athenæum. The Arts. The Savage. The Marlborough.

CLUB TYPES—SOME OF THE EARLIEST WORK OF MAX BEERBOHM AS A CARICATURIST.

named also being a capital story-teller, as his two serials, "An African Millionaire" and "Miss Cayley's Adventures," bear witness.



FACSIMILE OF HEADING TO LIST OF HER DOLLS WRITTEN BY QUEEN VICTORIA.

Popular science and natural history articles, written by the best authors, have been more prominent in THE STRAND than in any other magazine of its kind.

As early as 1892, when his boyish fame was at its height, Mr. Rudyard Kipling contributed "The Lost Legion," one of the best of his tales, to this magazine; and in the same year a genius of an entirely different stamp came before the public as a caricaturist in our pages. This was Mr. Henry Maxwell Beerbohm, now known, *tout court*, as Max Beerbohm, then an undergraduate at Merton College, Oxford. These precocious drawings of his for THE STRAND have been pronounced by many judges to be amongst the wittiest products of "Max's" pencil.

We have already mentioned the late Queen Victoria's interest in the magazine from its commencement. Although Her Majesty was always averse to undue publicity, yet whenever the Editor expressed a desire to publish any article of legitimate interest concerning the Court, both then and years afterwards, not only was permission freely accorded, but more than once the Royal hand itself condescended to correct the proofs and superintend the selection of the illustrations. The article on "Queen Victoria's Dolls" attracted the more universal attention at the time, inasmuch as the dolls themselves had, up to then, been seen by few, if any, outside the Royal Family. Another on "Personal Relics of the Queen and Her Children," which gave

GROUP OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S DOLLS—AN ILLUSTRATION TO THE ARTICLE ON QUEEN VICTORIA'S DOLLS WHICH APPEARED IN "THE STRAND MAGAZINE."

A whole group of dolls represent characters in the ballet of "Kenilworth," which was performed in 1831 at the famous King's Theatre. It would be interesting to know whether Her Majesty was herself taken to the opera, or whether the costumes were described to her, or whether the knowledge was obtained from prints, which latter theory, owing to the minuteness of detail, seems the most probable.

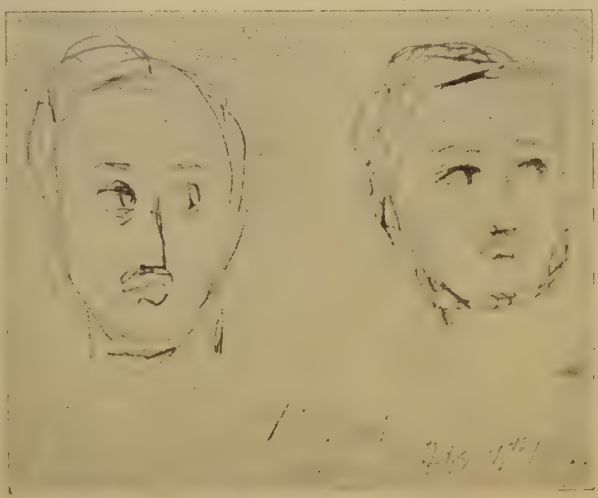
To this set the Princess Victoria contributed two of the characters, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and Amy Robsart in riding costume. (3)

The Earl of Leicester (1), who presents a distinctively masculine physiognomy, owing to the addition of painted black moustaches and whiskers, and the absence of a back comb, is attired in pink satin hose, slashed with white silk, a white satin tabbed tunic with pink satin slashings, and a white lace ruffle. On his breast he wears the blue ribbon of the Garter; and though he has no hat, probably a broad-brimmed velvet hat, with curling white plumes, found loose in the doll box, is his property.

PROOF CORRECTED BY QUEEN VICTORIA FOR "THE STRAND MAGAZINE."

her subjects a still more intimate glimpse into the formation of the character of their beloved ruler, and whose publication the Queen again supervised, was, besides, notable as the longest article that has ever appeared in THE STRAND MAGAZINE, running to thirty-nine pages.

Amongst the illustrations were two pencil studies of Prince Albert done by the Queen for the Court painter. But the most important article respecting the great Queen was that describing her conscientious efforts to master Hindustani, the language of so many millions of her Indian subjects. It showed, as nothing had ever shown before, that Victoria took her position as Empress of India seriously, and that in spite of her great age and preoccupations she was resolved to knit yet another bond of affection between herself and her Indian people. We select one of the illustrations from that article, reproducing a page of Her Majesty's Hindustani journal.



TWO PENCIL STUDIES OF PRINCE ALBERT MADE BY QUEEN VICTORIA.

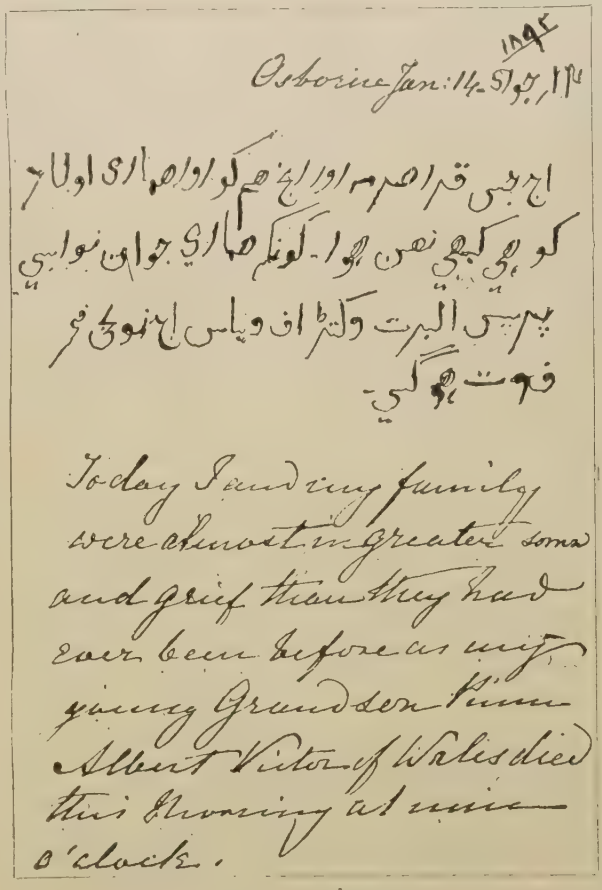
Worthy of mention, too, although appearing some years later, was an article on King Edward's truly marvellous collection of walking-sticks, in the preparation of which His Majesty was of signal help. Indeed, it could never have been written without that co-operation, as many of the stories were known to the King alone.

That their present Majesties are also not unwilling to allow the appearance in this magazine of articles of special interest to their subjects could have no better confirmation than the most entertaining account of the home life of the Royal Family which appears in the present number.

The first of the "Curiosities," which have become so well known, appeared in August, 1896. Since that date we have been able to set before our readers a total of over three thousand of the most remarkable photographs ever taken. A unique achievement, and one due solely to the zeal of our readers themselves, who have sent us photographs from every quarter of the globe.

"Illustrated interviews with interesting individuals are always an important item in THE STRAND" was the alliterative way Mr. T. P. O'Connor once put it, and these interviews have ranged from Cardinal Manning, twenty years ago, down to the latest celebrity, although of later years the interview has given place to the written memoir or autobiography, under the title of "My Reminiscences," which, of course, is a more intimate and authentic form. In one interview with the famous solicitor, Sir George Lewis, the name of the mysterious thief who stole Gainsborough's "Duchess of Devonshire" was actually disclosed, together with

his whereabouts. The disclosure created a sensation, but for years people remained incredulous, until one fine day the restitution of the great picture was made by the very person indicated by Sir George: "His name is Rayment! That is the man who stole the Duchess." In connection with one of the earlier interviews, one with Dr. Barnardo, that truly great philanthropist declared that it "had spread his aims and endeavours in the cause of the children abroad as, perhaps, nothing else had done," and of other articles, such as that on the Happy Evenings Association or the Duchess of Bedford's nurse-training scheme, similar praise has been uttered. In passing, it may be said that THE STRAND has always evinced a particular interest in London and Londoners, as its very name might imply, and it has always been glad to reflect any new aspect of life and effort in the capital of the British Empire.



A PAGE FROM QUEEN VICTORIA'S HINDUSTANI JOURNAL.

Another famous character who made his *début* by appearing in these pages was the redoubtable Brigadier Gerard, who, after modestly figuring in a short story, "The Medal of Brigadier Gerard," was found by his author to be worthy of delineation on a more spacious canvas. And so, after an interval, there poured forth in monthly succession the celebrated "Exploits of Brigadier Gerard," which took the place of Sherlock Holmes, who was (to all seeming) dashed to death over an Alpine cliff.

There are perhaps few, if any, characters in modern fiction in whose personality and achievements the public took a deeper interest than in those of Sherlock Holmes. It recalls the days of Dumas, when a woman in possession of a copy of the serial hot from the press woke up her spouse at three in the morning to tell him excitedly that Edmond Dantes, Count of Monte Cristo, had escaped from the Château d'If. One recalls now the sensation caused by the death of Holmes, recorded in the Christmas number of THE STRAND for 1893—how the man in the street went about speaking of the tragedy as if it were something that had really happened, of the public and private expressions of regret at the hero's fate. The Falls of Reichenbach became haunted by tourists, anxious to photograph the spot where Professor Moriarty and Holmes had gone down to their death, locked in each other's arms. "There, deep down in that dreadful cauldron of swirling water and seething foam, will lie for all time the most dangerous criminal and the foremost champion of the law of their generation — the best and wisest man I have ever known." So wrote Sherlock's creator, himself believing in his hero's fate, and on the strength of it the illustrator, the late Mr. Sydney Paget, executed a spirited drawing of the final scene, which was published as a frontispiece. But as we shall have occasion to notice later, Sherlock proved a hard man to kill. Meanwhile, the swaggering, Gasconnading, yet lovable old Brigadier, always in the limelight, always the hero of his spirited narrations, was a character well received by the public. Another of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's creations first appearing in these pages was the redoubtable "Rodney Stone," already a classic of modern romance.

During 1896 two articles appeared in THE STRAND of unusual interest—one on the Russian Coronations, which was prepared with the assistance of their Majesties the Czar and Czarina; and another dealing with Mr. Gladstone's visitors' book at Downing Street, one of the most notable autograph volumes in the world.

All aviators, including the brothers Wright, now acknowledge the debt they owe, in the invention of the aeroplane, to Professor S. P. Langley, of the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, who at the time of his death had brought his researches to the point of practicality. Indeed, fourteen years ago, in these pages, he wrote an article on his own aeroplane and published a picture of its flight, which may be described as the first representation of the working of that aerial vehicle whose development is now being watched by the whole world.

In the following year a new writer made his bow in these pages, one who has since won universal popularity and who has made good his claim to be regarded as one of the chief humorists of the world. We refer to Mr. W. W. Jacobs, whose inimitable stories of villagers and seafaring folk have for more than a dozen years past been identified with THE STRAND. One of the many tributes to his genius was that, when Mr. Roosevelt chose a parcel of standard books for his African sojourn, a collection of Mr. Jacobs's stories went cheek by jowl with Homer and Horace and Shakespeare and Gibbon. They were also, as Professor Woodrow Wilson tells us, great favourites with the late President Cleveland. Amongst Jacobs's characters Bob Pretty and the Night Watchman are two the world will not willingly let die. Besides his short yarns, "A Master of Craft," "Sunwich Port," "Dialstone Lane," and "Salthaven" have appeared in THE STRAND. Mr. H. G. Wells is another popular author who has contributed to these pages, beginning with "Mr. Ledbetter's Vacation" fourteen years ago, and afterwards with his striking serial, "The First Men in the Moon." In the present number Mr. Wells makes his appearance in a new character, in the most original and useful article on "Floor Games." It was for this publication, too, that Mr. F. Anstey wrote

WHICH WAY IS HE GOING?

HERE is an extremely interesting optical illusion. The horseman in the picture appears to be riding in either direction. As a matter of fact, however, the photograph was taken from behind.—Mr. H. C. Barton, 20, Vanbrugh Park, Blackheath, S.E.

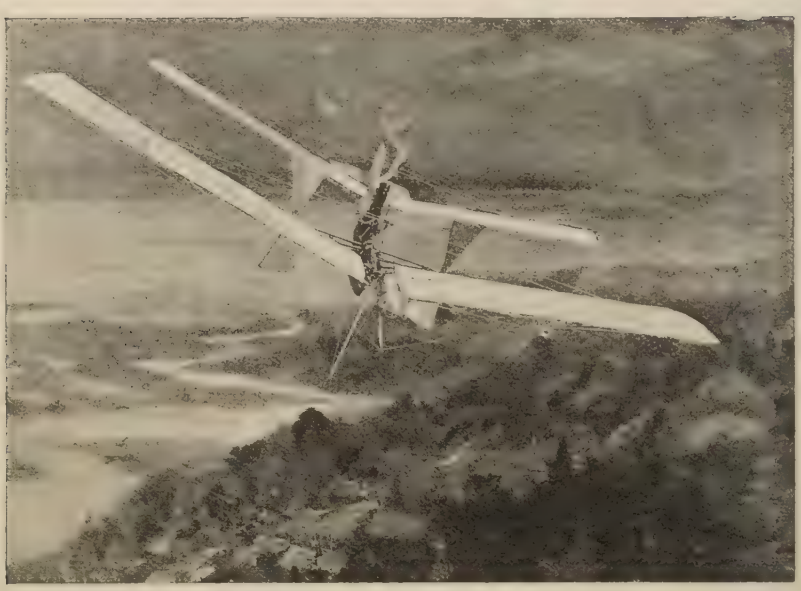
ONE BULLET SHOT THROUGH ANOTHER IN FLIGHT.

AN extraordinary incident which occurred at the Army Rifle Range, near Fort Thomas, Kentucky, U.S.A., where the Sixth Infantry Regiment conducts its annual target practice. Two officers chanced to be firing at right angles, and at last they fired simultaneously. The markers failed to record both shots, which was surprising, since the marksmen were the flower of their corps. The two bullets were at length found on the grass as we see them in the photograph. The smaller bullet, coated with nickel steel and fired from a Krag-Jorgensen magazine rifle, had pierced the first one, which was an ordinary bullet from a .45-cal. Springfield rifle. This curiosity was picked up by Lieutenant B. W. Atkinson, of the United States Army, and the photograph was sent to us by Mr. H. L. Bridwell, of 108, West Canal Street, Cincinnati.

A CRICKET CURIOSITY.

THE cricket-stump shown in my photograph was split in rather a curious manner. In trying to make a late cut over the wicket I failed to hit the ball and brought my bat down sharply on the off stump. The portion of the bail resting on the stump was driven into it, splitting it as shown in the photograph, the portion of the bail remaining firmly wedged in the split.—Mr. H. R. Dortridge, 42, Amhurst Park, Stamford Hill, N.

SOME TYPICAL "CURIOSITIES" OF THE PAST.



PROFESSOR LANGLEY'S AEROPLANE, PUBLISHED IN "THE STRAND" IN 1897—YEARS BEFORE THE WRIGHT BROTHERS' DEVELOPMENT.

"The Brass Bottle," which, like a remarkable number of other STRAND stories, afterwards enjoyed great success as a play; and here, too, appeared Mr. Kipling's "Puck of Pook's Hill" and Mr. Hall Caine's "The White Prophet." But it would be invidious, and indeed impossible in the space at our command, to mention all the notable contributors and contributions to THE STRAND during these twenty-one years. One must refer in passing, however, to two or three features of unusual attractiveness, such as the articles which the hero of the famous Dreyfus affair wrote on "My Life on Devil's Island," "Reminiscences and Reflections," by Sir John Hare, the "Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt," and the "Story of My Life" by Father Gapon, the mysterious hero of the terrible St. Petersburg massacres of a few years ago.

As Charles Dickens wrote of Tiny Tim, Sherlock Holmes did *not* die, after all, at least not when everyone thought he did, but to the gratification of a million readers emerged in 1903 from his retirement, when the industrious and energetic Dr. Watson began chronicling anew some of the best of his adventures, one of which makes its appearance in the present number.

Before we conclude our pleasant task of recalling, we hope with becoming modesty, but not without some natural pride, a few of the interesting features of past years, there is one point on which we should like to say a word. We refer to the question of advertisements, regarding which we would ask our readers to remember two things: first, that these pages have never been allowed to encroach upon the space devoted to stories and articles—which, in fact, occupy a larger space to-day than when we started; and, secondly, that a magazine which makes a point of securing for its readers "the very best of everything"—which is always an expensive matter—could not be produced at all if it were not for the advertisements. Moreover, the pages in which the leading traders of the Kingdom make their announcements are regularly looked through by thousands of readers, who do much of their shopping through the medium of these pages, which, so to speak, bring the shop-window into the home.

Thus THE STRAND MAGAZINE, having reached its majority, will now go forward with confidence, doing its best to dissipate dullness and to afford innocent entertainment to the public, and thereby to continue, in the words of its honoured founder, to "occupy a position which will justify its existence." At the time when he received the rank of a baronetcy the letter from Lord Rosebery which informed him of the proposed distinction contained a phrase which afforded him a very great and sincere pleasure. The title was intended "to commemorate not only your political services but the good work that you have done in the cause of healthy, popular literature."

That has always been, and always will be, the motto of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

POTS O' MONEY.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Joseph Simpson, R.B.A.

OWEN BENTLEY was feeling embarrassed. He looked at Mr. Shepperd, and with difficulty restrained himself from standing on one leg and twiddling his fingers. At one period of his career, before the influence of his uncle Henry had placed him in the London and Suburban Bank, Owen had been an actor. On the strength of a batting average of thirty-three point nought seven for Middlesex, he had been engaged by the astute musical-comedy impresario to whom the idea first occurred that, if you have got to have young men to chant "We are merry and gay, tra-la, for this is Bohemiah," in the Artists' Ball scene, you might just as well have young men whose names are known to the public. He had not been an actor long, for loss of form had put him out of first-class cricket, and the impresario had given his place in the next piece to a googly bowler who had done well in the last 'Varsity match; but he had been one long enough to experience that sinking sensation which is known as stage-fright. And now, as he began to explain to Mr. Shepperd that he wished for his consent to marry his daughter Audrey, he found himself suffering exactly the same symptoms.

From the very start, from the moment when he revealed the fact that his income, salary and private means included, amounted to less than two hundred pounds, he had realized that this was going to be one of his failures. It was the gruesome Early Victorianness of it all that took the heart out of him. Mr. Shepperd had always reminded him

"IT WOULD BE BEST, IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I THINK, IF YOU DID NOT SEE MY DAUGHTER AGAIN."

of a heavy father out of a three-volume novel, but, compared with his demeanour as he listened now, his attitude hitherto had been light and whimsical. Until this moment Owen had not imagined that this sort of thing ever happened nowadays outside the comic papers. By the end of the second minute he would not have been surprised to find himself sailing through the air, urged by Mr. Shepperd's boot, his transit indicated by a dotted line and a few stars.

Mr. Shepperd's manner was inclined to bleakness.

"This is most unfortunate," he said. "Most unfortunate. I have my daughter's happiness to consider. It is my duty as a father." He paused. "You say you have no prospects? I should have supposed that your uncle——? Surely, with his influence——?"

"My uncle shot his bolt when he got me into the bank. That finished him, as far as I'm concerned. I'm not his only nephew, you know. There are about a hundred others, all trailing him like bloodhounds."

Mr. Shepperd coughed the small cough of disapproval. He was feeling more than a little aggrieved.

He had met Owen for the first time at dinner at the house of his uncle Henry, a man of unquestioned substance, whose habit it was to invite each of his eleven nephews to dinner once a year. But Mr. Shepperd did not know this. For all he knew, Owen was in the habit of hobnobbing with the great man every night. He could not say exactly that it was sharp practice on Owen's part to accept his invitation to call, and, having called, to continue calling long enough to make the present deplorable situation possible; but he felt that it would have been in better taste for the young man to have effaced himself and behaved more like a bank-clerk and less like an heir.

"I am exceedingly sorry for this, Mr. Bentley," he said, "but you will understand that I cannot—— It is, of course, out of the question. It would be best, in the circumstances, I think, if you did not see my daughter again——"

"She's waiting in the passage outside," said Owen, simply.

"——after to-day. Good-bye."

Owen left the room. Audrey was hovering in the neighbourhood of the door. She came quickly up to him, and his spirits rose, as they always did, at the sight of her.

"Well?" she said.

He shook his head.

"No good," he said.

Audrey considered the problem for a moment, and was rewarded with an idea.

"Shall I go in and cry?"

"It wouldn't be any use."

"Tell me what happened."

"He said I mustn't see you again."

"He didn't mean it."

"He thinks he did."

Audrey reflected.

"We shall simply have to keep writing, then. And we can talk on the telephone. That isn't seeing each other. Has your bank a telephone?"

"Yes. But——"

"That's all right, then. I'll ring you up every day."

"I wish I could make some money," said Owen, thoughtfully. "But I seem to be one of those chumps who can't. Nothing I try comes off. I've never drawn anything except a blank in a sweep. I spent about two pounds on sixpenny postal orders when the Limerick craze was on, and didn't win a thing. Once when I was on tour I worked myself to a shadow, dramatizing a novel. Nothing came of that, either."

"What novel?"

"A thing called 'White Roses,' by a woman named Edith Butler."

Audrey looked up quickly.

"I suppose you knew her very well? Were you great friends?"

"I didn't know her at all. I'd never met her. I just happened to buy the thing at a bookstall, and thought it would make a good play. I expect it was pretty bad rot. Anyhow, she never took the trouble to send it back or even to acknowledge receipt."

"Perhaps she never got it?"

"I registered it."

"She was a cat," said Audrey, decidedly. "I'm glad of it, though. If another woman had helped you make a lot of money, I should have died of jealousy."

Routine is death to heroism. For the first few days after his parting with Mr. Shepperd, Owen was in heroic mood, full of vaguely dashing schemes, regarding the world as his oyster and burning to get at it, sword in hand. But Routine, with its ledgers and its copying-ink and its customers, fell like a grey cloud athwart his horizon, blotting out rainbow visions of sudden wealth, dramatically won. Day by day the glow faded and hopelessness grew.

If the glow did not entirely fade it was due to Audrey, who more than fulfilled her pro-

"SHALL I GO IN AND CRY?"

mise of ringing him up on the telephone. She rang him up at least once, frequently several times, every day, a fact which was noted and commented upon in a harshly critical spirit by the head of his department, a man with no soul and a strong objection to doing his subordinates' work for them.

As a rule, her conversation, though pleasing,

was discursive and lacked central motive, but one morning she had genuine news to impart.

"Owen"—her voice was excited—"have you seen the paper to-day? Then listen. I'll read it out. Are you listening? This is what it says: 'The Piccadilly Theatre will re-open shortly with a dramatized version of Miss Edith Butler's popular novel, "White Roses," prepared by the authoress herself. A strong cast is being engaged, including——' And then a lot of names. What are you going to do about it, Owen?"

"What am I going to do?"

"Don't you see what's happened? That awful woman has stolen your play. She has waited all these years, hoping you would forget. What are you laughing at?"

"I wasn't laughing."

"Yes, you were. It tickled my ear. I'll ring off if you do it again. You don't believe me. Well, you wait and see if I'm not——"

"Edith Butler's incapable of such a thing."

There was a slight pause at the other end of the wire.

"I thought you said you didn't know her," said Audrey, jealously.

"I don't—I don't," said Owen, hastily. "But I've read her books. They're simply chunks of superfatted sentiment. She's a sort of literary onion. She compels tears. A woman like that couldn't steal a play if she tried."

"You can't judge authors from their books. You must go and see the play when it comes on. Then you'll see I'm right. I'm absolutely certain that woman is trying to swindle you. Don't laugh in that horrid way. Very well, I told you I should ring off, and now I'm going to."

At the beginning of the next month Owen's annual holiday arrived. The authorities of the London and Suburban Bank were no niggards. They recognized that a man is not a machine. They gave their employés ten days in the year in which to tone up their systems for another twelve months' work.

Owen had spent his boyhood in the Shropshire village of which his father had been rector, and thither he went when his holiday came round, to the farm of one Dorman. He was glad of the chance to get to Shropshire. There is something about the country there, with its green fields and miniature rivers, that soothes the wounded spirit and forms a pleasant background for sentimental musings.

It was comfortable at the farm. The household consisted of Mr. Dorman, an old acquaintance, his ten-year-old son George, and Mr. Dorman's mother, an aged lady with a considerable local reputation as a wise woman. Rumour had it that the future held no mysteries for her, and it was known that she could cure warts, bruised fingers, and even the botts by means of spells.

Except for these, Owen had fancied that he was alone in the house. It seemed not, however. There was a primeval piano in his sitting-room, and on the second morning it suited his mood to sit down at this and sing "Asthore," the fruity pathos of which ballad appealed to him strongly at this time, accompanying himself by an ingenious arrangement in three chords. He had hardly begun, however, when Mr. Dorman appeared, somewhat agitated.

"If you don't mind, Mr. Owen," he said. "I forgot to tell you. There's a lit'ery gent boarding with me in the room above, and he can't bear to be disturbed."

A muffled stamping from the ceiling bore out his words.

"Writing a book, he is," continued Mr. Dorman. "He caught young George a clip over the ear-'ole yesterday for blowing his trumpet on the stairs. Gave him sixpence afterwards and said he'd skin him if he ever did it again. So, if you don't mind——"

"Oh, all right," said Owen. "Who is he?"

"Gentleman of the name of Prosser."

Owen could not recollect having come across any work by anyone of that name; but he was not a wide reader; and, whether the man above was a celebrity or not, he was entitled to quiet.

"I never heard of him," he said, "but that's no reason why I should disturb him. Let him rip. I'll cut out the musical effects in future."

The days passed smoothly by. The literary man remained invisible, though occasionally audible, tramping the floor in the frenzy of composition. Nor, until the last day of his visit, did Owen see old Mrs. Dorman.

That she was not unaware of his presence in the house, however, was indicated on the last morning. He was smoking an after-breakfast pipe at the open window and waiting for the dog-cart that was to take him to the station, when George, the son of the house, entered.

George stood in the doorway, grinned, and said:—

"Farsezjerligranmatellyerforchbythercards?"

"Eh?" said Owen.

The youth repeated the word.

"Once again."

On the second repetition light began to creep in. A boyhood spent in the place, added to this ten days' stay, had made Owen something of a linguist.

"Father says would I like grandma to do what?"

"Tell yer forch'n by ther cards."

"Where is she?"

"Backyarnder."

Owen followed him into the kitchen, where he found Mr. Dorman, the farmer, and, seated at the table, fumbling with a pack of cards, an old woman, whom he remembered well.

"Mother wants to tell your fortune," said Mr. Dorman, in a hoarse aside. "She always will tell visitors' fortunes. She told Mr. Prosser's, and he didn't half like it because she said he'd be engaged in two months and married inside the year. He said wild horses wouldn't make him do it."

"She can tell me that if she likes. I sha'n't object."

"Mother, here's Mr. Owen."

"I seed him fast enough," said the old woman, briskly. "Shuffle, an' cut three times."

She then performed mysterious manœuvres with the cards.

"I see pots o' money," announced the sibyl.

"'I SEE POTS O' MONEY,' ANNOUNCED THE SIBYL."

"If she says it, it's there right enough," said her son.

"She means my bonus," said Owen. "But that's only ten pounds. And I lose it if I'm late twice more before Christmas."

"It'll come sure enough."

"Pots," said the old woman, and she was still mumbling the encouraging word when Owen left the kitchen and returned to the sitting-room.

He laughed rather ruefully. At that moment he could have found a use for pots o' money.

He walked to the window and looked out. It was a glorious morning. The heat-mist was dancing over the meadow beyond the brook, and from the farmyard came the liquid charawks of care-free fowls. It seemed wicked to leave these haunts of peace for London on such a day.

An acute melancholy seized him. Absently, he sat down at the piano. The preju-

dices of literary Mr. Prosser had slipped from his mind. Softly at first, then gathering volume as the spirit of the song gripped him, he began to sing "Asthore." He became absorbed.

He had just, for the sixth time, won through to "Iyam-ah waiting for-er theeee-yass-thorre," and was doing some intricate three-chord work preparatory to starting over again, when a loaf of bread whizzed past his ear. It missed him by an inch, and crashed against a plaster statuette of the Infant Samuel on the top of the piano.

It was a standard loaf, containing eighty per cent. of the semolina, and it practically wiped the Infant Samuel out of existence. At the same moment, at his back, there sounded a loud, wrathful snort.

He spun round. The door was open, and at the other side of the table was standing a large, black-bearded, shirt-sleeved man, in an attitude rather reminiscent of Ajax defying the lightning. His hands trembled. His beard bristled. His eyes gleamed ferociously beneath enormous eyebrows. As Owen turned, he gave tongue in a voice like the discharge of a broadside.

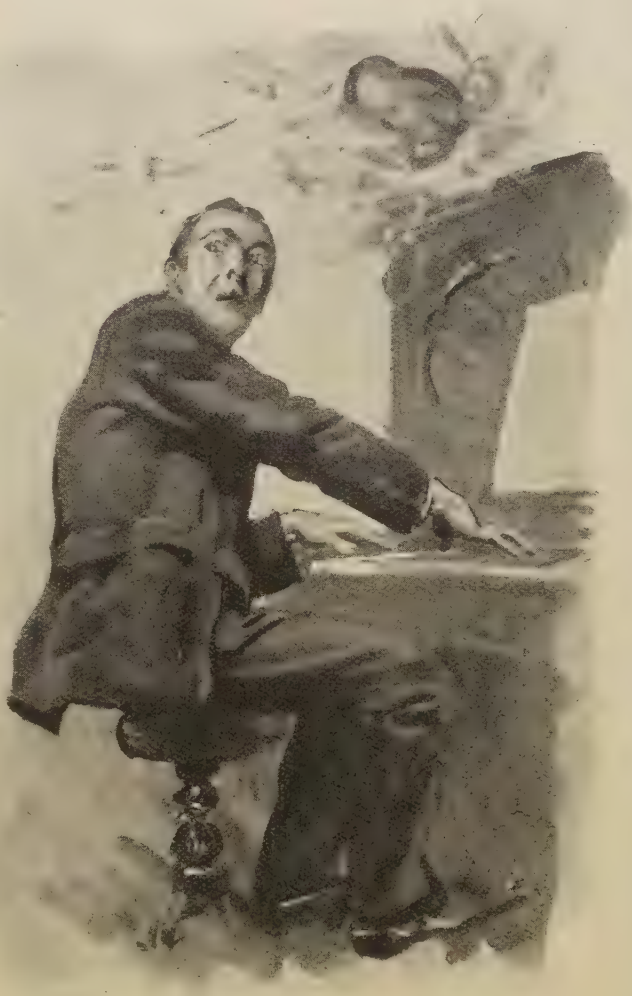
"Stop it!"

Owen's mind, wrenched too suddenly from the dreamy future to the vivid present, was not yet completely under control. He gaped.

"Stop — that — infernal — noise!" roared the man.

He shot through the door, banging it after him, and pounded up the stairs.

Owen was annoyed. The artistic temperament was all very well, but there were limits. It was absurd that obscure authors should behave in this way. Prosser! Who on earth was Prosser? Had anyone ever heard of him? No! Yet here he was going about the country clipping small boys over the ear-hole and flinging loaves of bread at bank-clerks as if he were Henry James or Marie Corelli. Owen reproached himself bitterly for his momentary loss of presence of mind. If he had only kept his head, he could have taken a flying shot at the man with the marmalade-pot. It had been within easy reach. Instead of which, he had merely stood and gaped. Of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, "It might have been."



"A LOAF OF BREAD WHIZZED PAST HIS EAR."

His manly regret was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Dorman with the information that the dog-cart was at the door.

Audrey was out of town when Owen arrived in London, but she returned a week later. The sound of her voice through the telephone did much to cure the restlessness from which he had been suffering since the conclusion of his holiday. But the thought

that she was so near yet so inaccessible produced in him a meditative melancholy which enveloped him like a cloud that would not lift. His manner became distrait. He lost weight.

If customers were not vaguely pained by his sad, pale face, it was only because the fierce rush of modern commercial life leaves your business man little leisure for observing pallor in bank-clerks. What did pain them was the gentle dreaminess with which he performed his duties. He was in the Inward Bills Department, one of the features of which was the sudden inrush, towards the end of each afternoon, of hatless, energetic young men with leather bags strapped to their left arms, clamouring for mysterious crackling documents, much fastened with pins. Owen had never quite understood what it was that these young men did want, and now his detached mind refused even more emphatically to grapple with the problem. He distributed the documents at random with the air of a preoccupied monarch scattering largess to the mob, and the subsequent chaos had to be handled by a wrathful head of the department in person.

Man's power of endurance is limited. At the end of the second week the overwrought head appealed passionately for relief, and Owen was removed to the Postage Department, where, when he had leisure from answering Audrey's telephone calls, he entered the addresses of letters in a large book and took them to the post. He was supposed also to stamp them, but a man in love cannot think of everything, and he was apt at times to overlook this formality.

One morning, receiving from one of the bank messengers the usual intimation that a lady wished to speak to him on the telephone, he went to the box and took up the receiver.

"Is that you, Owen? Owen, I went to 'White Roses' last night. Have you been yet?"

"Not yet."

"Then you must go to-night. Owen, I'm *certain* you wrote it. It's perfectly lovely. I cried my eyes out. If you don't go to-night, I'll never speak to you again, even on the telephone. Promise."

"Must I?"

"Yes, you must. Why, suppose it *is* yours! It may mean a fortune. The stalls were simply packed. I'm going to ring up the theatre now and engage a seat for you, and pay for it myself."

"No—I say——" protested Owen.

"Yes, I shall. I can't trust you to go if I don't. And I'll ring up early to-morrow to hear all about it. Good-bye."

Owen left the box somewhat depressed. Life was quite gloomy enough as it was, without going out of one's way to cry one's eyes out over sentimental plays.

His depression was increased by the receipt, on his return to his department, of a message from the manager, stating that he would like to see Mr. Bentley in his private room for a moment. Owen never enjoyed these little chats with Authority. Out of office hours, in the circle of his friends, he had no doubt the manager was a delightful and entertaining companion; but in his private room his conversation was less enjoyable.

The manager was seated at his table, thoughtfully regarding the ceiling. His resemblance to a stuffed trout, always striking, was subtly accentuated, and Owen, an expert in these matters, felt that his fears had been well founded—there was trouble in the air. Somebody had been complaining of him, and he was now about, as the phrase went, to be "run in."

A large man, seated with his back to the door, turned as he entered, and Owen recognized the well-remembered features of Mr. Prosser, the literary loaf-slinger.

Owen regarded him without resentment. Since returning to London he had taken the trouble of looking up his name in "Who's Who," and had found that he was not so undistinguished as he had supposed. He was, it appeared, a Regius Professor and the author of some half-dozen works on sociology—a record, Owen felt, that almost justified loaf-flinging and earhole-clipping in moments of irritation.

The manager started to speak, but the man of letters anticipated him.

"Is this the fool?" he roared. "Young man, I have no wish to be hard on a congenital idiot who is not responsible for his actions, but I must insist on an explanation. I understand that you are in charge of the correspondence in this office. Well, during the last week you have three times sent unstamped letters to my *fiancée*, Miss Vera Delane, Woodlands, Southbourne, Hants. What's the matter with you? Do you think she likes paying twopence a time, or what is it?"

Owen's mind leaped back at the words. They recalled something to him. Then he remembered.

He was conscious of a not unpleasant thrill. He had not known that he was

superstitious, but for some reason he had not been able to get those absurd words of Mr. Dorman's mother out of his mind. And here was another prediction of hers, equally improbable, fulfilled to the letter.

"Great Scot!" he cried. "Are you going to be married?"

Mr. Prosser and the manager started simultaneously.

"Mrs. Dorman said you would be," said Owen. "Don't you remember?"

Mr. Prosser looked keenly at him.

"Why, I've seen you before," he said. "You're the young turnip-headed scallywag at the farm."

"That's right," said Owen.

"I've been wanting to meet you again. I thought the whole thing over, and it struck me," said Mr. Prosser, handsomely, "that I may have seemed a little abrupt at our last meeting."

"No, no."

"The fact is, I was in the middle of an infernally difficult passage of my book that morning, and when you began——"

"It was my fault entirely. I quite understand."

Mr. Prosser produced a card-case.

"We must see more of each other," he said, "Come and have a bit of dinner some night. Come to-night."

"I'm very sorry. I have to go to the theatre to-night."

"Then come and have a bit of supper afterwards. Excellent. Meet me at the Savoy at eleven-fifteen. I'm glad I didn't hit you with that loaf. Abruptness has been my failing through life. My father was just the same. Eleven-fifteen at the Savoy, then."

The manager, who had been listening with some restlessness to the conversation, now intervened. He was a man with a sense of the fitness of things, and he objected to having his private room made the scene of what appeared to be a reunion of old college chums. He hinted as much.

"Ha! Prrumph!" he observed, disapprovingly. "Er—Mr. Bentley, that is all. You may return to your work—ah h'mmm! Kindly be more careful another time in stamping the letters."

"Yes, by Jove," said Mr. Prosser, suddenly reminded of his wrongs, "that's right. Exercise a little ordinary care, you ivory-skulled young son of a gun. Do you think Miss Delane is *made* of twopences? Keep an eye on him," he urged the manager. "These young fellows nowadays want someone standing over them with a knout all the time. Be more careful another time, young man. Eleven-fifteen, remember. Make a note of it, or you'll go forgetting *that*."

The seat which Audrey had bought for him at the Piccadilly Theatre proved to be in the centre of the sixth row of stalls—practically a death-trap. Whatever his sufferings might be, escape was impossible. He was securely wedged in.

The cheaper parts of the house were sparsely occupied, but the stalls were full. Owen, disapproving of the whole business, refused to buy a programme, and settled himself in his seat, prepared for the worst. He had a vivid recollection of "White Roses," the novel, and he did not anticipate any keen enjoyment from it in its dramatized form. He had long ceased to be a member of that large public for which Miss Edith Butler catered. The sentimental adventures of governesses in ducal houses—the heroine of "White Roses" was a governess—no longer contented his soul.

There is always a curiously dreamlike atmosphere about a play founded on a book. One seems to have seen it all before. During the whole of the first act Owen attributed to this his feeling of familiarity with what was going on on the stage. At the beginning of the second act he found himself anticipating events. But it was not till the third act that the truth sank in.

The third was the only act in which, in his dramatization, he had taken any real liberties with the text of the novel. But in this act he had introduced a character who did not appear in the novel—a creature of his own imagination. And now, with bulging eyes, he observed this creature emerge from the wings, and heard him utter lines which he now clearly remembered having written.

Audrey had been right! Serpent Edith Butler had stolen his play.

His mind, during the remainder of the play, was active. By the time the final curtain fell and he passed out into the open air he had perceived some of the difficulties of the case. To prove oneself the author of an original play is hard, but not impossible. Friends to whom one had sketched the plot may come forward as witnesses. One may have preserved rough notes. But a dramatization of a novel is another matter. All dramatizations of any given novel must necessarily be very much alike.

He started to walk along Piccadilly, and

had reached Hyde Park Corner before he recollected that he had an engagement to take supper with Mr. Prosser at the Savoy Hotel. He hailed a cab.

"You're late," boomed the author of sociological treatises, as he appeared. "You're infernally late. I suppose, in your woollen-headed way, you forgot all about it. Come along. We'll just have time for an olive and a glass of something before they turn the lights out."

Owen was still thinking deeply as he began his supper. Surely there was some way by which he could prove his claims. What had he done with the original manuscript? He remembered now. He had burnt it. It had seemed mere useless litter then. Probably, he felt bitterly, the woman Butler had counted on this.

Mr. Prosser concluded an animated conversation with a waiter on the subject of the wines of France, leaned forward, and, having helped himself briskly to anchovies, began to talk. He talked loudly and rapidly. Owen, his thoughts far away, hardly listened.

Presently the waiter returned with the selected brand. He filled Owen's glass, and Owen drank and felt better. Finding his glass magically full once more, he emptied it again. And then suddenly he found himself looking across the table at his host, and feeling a sense of absolute conviction that this was the one man of all others whom he would have selected as a confidant. How kindly, though somewhat misty, his face was! How soothing, if a little indistinct, his voice!

"Prosser," he said, "you are a man of the world, and I should like your advice. What would you do in a case like this? I go to a theatre to see a play, and what do I find?"

He paused, and eyed his host impressively.

"What's that tune they're playing?" said Mr. Prosser. "You hear it everywhere. One of those Viennese things, I suppose."

Owen was annoyed. He began to doubt whether, after all, Mr. Prosser's virtues as a confidant were not more apparent than real.

"I find, by Jove," he continued, "that I wrote the thing myself."

"It's not a patch on 'The Merry Widow,'" said Mr. Prosser.

Owen thumped the table.

"I tell you I find I wrote the thing myself."

"What thing?"

"This play I'm telling you about. This 'White Roses' thing."

He found that he had at last got his host's ear. Mr. Prosser seemed genuinely interested.

"What do you mean?"

Owen plunged into his story. He started from its dim beginning, from the days when he had bought the novel on his journey from Bath to Cheltenham. He described his methods of work, his registering of the package, his suspense, his growing resignation. He sketched the progress of his life. He spoke of Audrey and gave a crisp character-sketch of Mr. Shepperd. He took his hearer right up to the moment when the truth had come home to him.

Towards the end of his narrative the lights went out, and he finished his story in the hotel courtyard. In the cool air he felt revived. The outlines of Mr. Prosser became sharp and distinct again.

The sociologist listened admirably. He appeared absorbed, and did not interrupt once.

"What makes you so certain that this was your version?" he asked, as they passed into the Strand.

Owen told him of the creature of his imagination in Act III.

"But you have lost your manuscript?"

"Yes; I burnt it."

"Just what one might have expected you to do," said Mr. Prosser, unkindly. "Young man, I begin to believe that there may be something in this. You haven't got a ghost of a proof that would hold water in a court of law, of course; but still, I'm inclined to believe you. For one thing, you haven't the intelligence to invent such a story."

Owen thanked him.

"In fact, if you can answer me one question I shall be satisfied."

It seemed to Owen that Mr. Prosser was tending to get a little above himself. As an intelligent listener he had been of service, but that appeared to be no reason why he should constitute himself a sort of judge and master of the ceremonies.

"That's very good of you," he said; "but will Edith Butler be satisfied? That's more to the point."

"I *am* Edith Butler," said Mr. Prosser.

Owen stopped. "You?"

"You need not babble it from the housetops. You are the only person besides my agent who knows it, and I wouldn't have told you if I could have helped it. It isn't a thing I want known. Great Scot, man, don't goggle at me like a fish! Haven't you heard of pseudonyms before?"

"Yes, but——"

"Well, never mind. Take it from me that I *am* Edith Butler. Now listen to me. That manuscript reached me when I was in the

country. There was no name on it. That in itself points strongly to the fact that you were its author. It was precisely the chuckle-headed sort of thing you would have done, to put no name on the thing."

"I enclosed a letter, anyhow."

"There was a letter enclosed. I opened the parcel out of doors. There was a fresh breeze blowing at the time. It caught the letter, and that was the last I saw of it. I had read as far as 'Dear Madam.' But one thing I do remember about it, and that was that it was sent me from some hotel in Cheltenham, and I could remember it if I heard it. Now, then?"

"I can tell it you. It was Wilbraham's. I was stopping there."

"You pass," said Mr. Prosser. "It was Wilbraham's."

Owen's heart gave a jump. For a moment he walked on air.

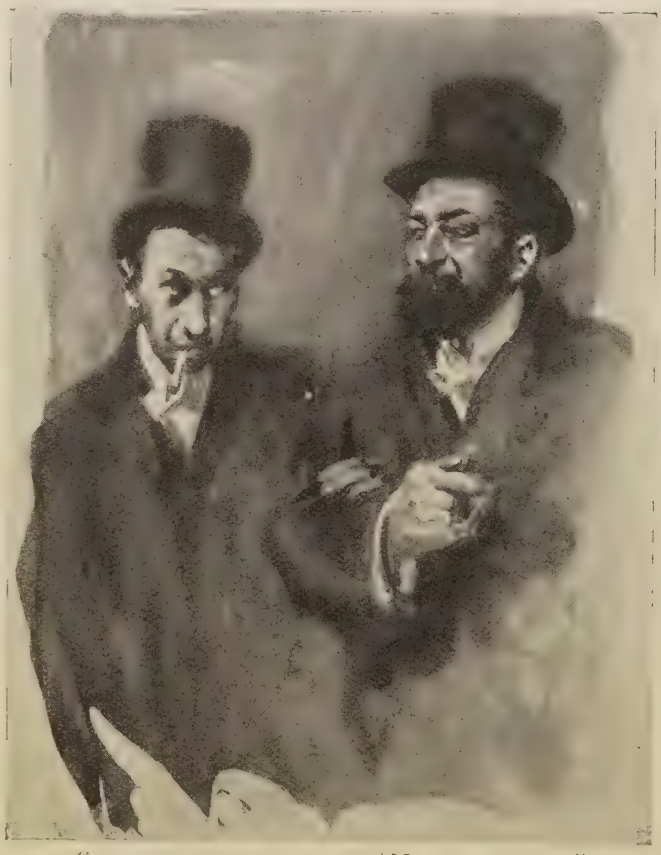
"Then do you mean to say that it's all right—that you believe——"

"I do," said Mr. Prosser. "By the way," he said, "the notice of 'White Roses' went up last night."

Owen's heart turned to lead.

"But—but——" he stammered. "But to-night the house was packed."

"It was. Packed with paper. All the merry dead-heads in London were there. It has been the worst failure this season. And, by George," he cried, with sudden vehemence, "serve 'em right. If I told them once it would fail in England, I told them a hundred times. The London public won't stand that sort of blithering twaddle."



"TAKE IT FROM ME THAT I AM EDITH BUTLER."

Owen stopped and looked round. A cab was standing across the road. He signalled to it. He felt incapable of walking home. No physical blow could have unmanned him more completely than this hideous disappointment just when, by a miracle, everything seemed to be running his way.

"Sooner ride than walk," said Mr. Prosser, pushing his head through the open window. "Laziness — slackness — that's the curse of the modern young man. Where shall I tell him to drive to?"

Owen mentioned his address. It struck him that he had not thanked his host for his hospitality.

"It was awfully good of you to give me supper, Mr. Prosser," he said. "I've enjoyed it tremendously."

"Come again," said Mr. Prosser. "I'm afraid you're disappointed about the play?"

Owen forced a smile.

"Oh, no, that's all right," he said. "It can't be helped."

Mr. Prosser half turned, then thrust his head through the window again.

"I knew there was something I had forgotten to say," he said. "I ought to have told you that the play was produced in America before it came to London. It ran two seasons in New York and one in Chicago, and there are three companies playing it still on the road. Here's my card. Come round and see me to-morrow. I can't tell you the actual figures off-hand, but you'll be all right. You'll have pots o' money."

THE HOME LIFE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

From a Photograph by W. & D. Downey, London.

From a Photograph by W. & D. Downey, London.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE OF UNIQUE INTEREST IS WRITTEN BY AN OFFICIAL OF THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, AND IS PUBLISHED WITH THE GRACIOUS PERMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN. THE ACCOMPANYING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ROYAL CHILDREN HAVE BEEN EXPRESSLY SELECTED FOR THIS ARTICLE BY THE QUEEN HERSELF.

THE wrench that it caused Her Majesty Queen Mary to leave her children in order to accompany the King to India can only be realized by those who are in daily touch with the Court and are able to witness the close affection that exists between the Queen and her family. This is at once touching and impressive in the extreme. Her Majesty frankly confesses that she is never so perfectly and completely happy as when she has her children about her, and she as thoroughly enters into their aspirations as she does into their pastimes. Needless to say, this affection is returned to the full.

When the Prince of Wales was born she nursed him constantly, and all her public duties had, perforce, to go by the board; her infant son was her all in all, and upon more than one occasion she was heard to lament that she did not occupy a more humble position in life, in order that she might be with her precious baby more often.

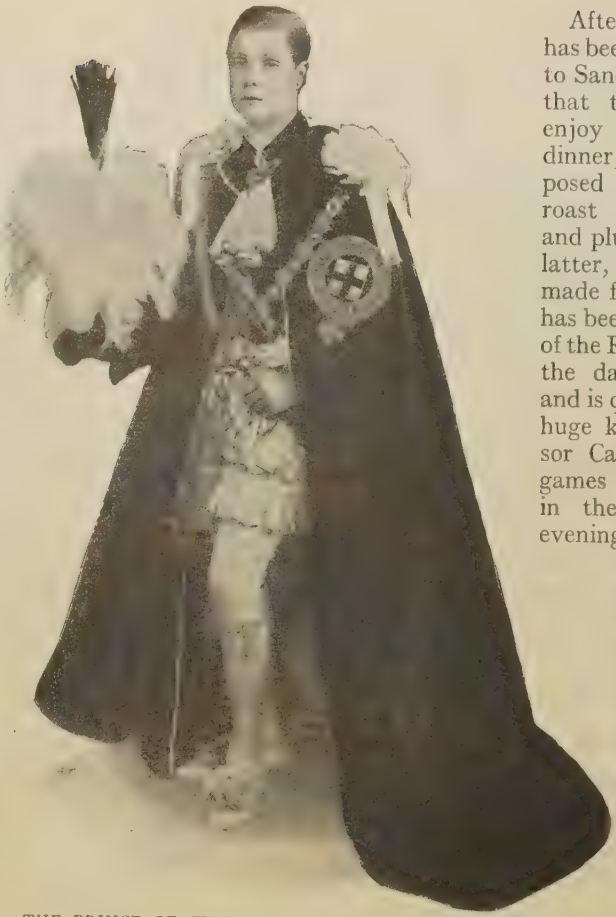
As the family increased, York Cottage became quite a perfect example of what an English home should be. Time and again Her Majesty has been absent from Court merely because she preferred to be with her children, while at her especial request her appearances in public were reduced to the absolute minimum, so that she might have all the more time to devote to them. The Queen's is an essentially domestic nature, and she has neither sought the pomp and circumstance of a Court nor does she covet them.

An example of this was provided when, shortly after the death of the late King Edward, it became necessary for her to transfer her homes from Marlborough House and York Cottage to Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle. Her first anxiety was that fitting quarters should be provided for her family. In each case the apartments pro-

vided for the Royal children have been placed in close proximity to those occupied by Her Majesty, and before to-day she has been known to give up her bedroom to one of her children upon their arrival at one or other of the Royal residences, in case the beds provided for them were not thoroughly aired, though, needless to add, every precaution in this direction had been previously taken by those responsible for this duty.

Christmas has always been a particularly happy time for the Royal children, and though there will be affectionate letters awaiting them from their mother upon the morning of the all-eventful day, they will sorely miss the cheery Christmas greeting that His Majesty has been wont to convey to them very early in the day, and their presents will not have quite the same attraction as if they were handed to them by the gracious hands of their mother. As a rule the King and Queen have spent Christmas at York Cottage, and the first duty of the little ones, after breakfast and before morning service, that they have never yet missed so soon as their age permitted them to be taken to church, was to walk across the park to convey to the late King and to Queen Alexandra their joyous compliments of the season.

This visit, by the way, will not be absent this year, since the Queen-Mother will be in residence at Sandringham—"my home," as she termed it upon an occasion that is probably destined to become historic; and when she leaves her room she will find a happy little band awaiting her to acclaim her in that fashion which we are pleased to think is essentially British.



THE PRINCE OF WALES IN THE ROBES OF THE GARTER.
From a Photograph by W. & D. Downey.

After service a return has been made in the past to Sandringham in order that the children may enjoy their Christmas dinner, which is composed of the traditional roast turkey, sausages, and plum-pudding. The latter, by the way, is made from a recipe that has been in the possession of the Royal Family since the days of George I., and is compounded in the huge kitchens at Windsor Castle.* There are games for the children in the afternoon and evening, and they return home thoroughly tired out, but having had a day that lives long in their lives, and looking forward to Boxing Day, when, at dusk, the great Christmas-tree, erected in the ballroom there and reaching almost to the roof, is illuminated with countless little electric glow-lamps and loaded with toys and presents, not for themselves alone, but for the members of the Household, down to the kitchen staff, and for such of their friends as they care to honour in this fashion. A few years ago these presents for those in residence at the house were handed to the recipients by the present Prince of Wales, but last year Princess Mary was permitted to undertake this task.

King Edward was always passionately fond of children of all ages, as he so often demonstrated, and his grandchildren were immense favourites with him. Often, early in the morning, he would walk over to York Cottage, where his arrival was received with

* We are glad to be able to give, by permission, this recipe, which is composed as follows: 1½lb. suet (finely shredded), 1lb. Demerara sugar, 1lb. small raisins, 1lb. plums (stoned and cut in half), 4oz. citron (cut into thin slices), 4oz. candied peel (cut into thin slices), teaspoonful of mixed spice, half a grated nutmeg, two teaspoonfuls of salt, 1lb. bread crumbs, ½lb. sifted flour, 1lb. of eggs (weighed in their shells), wineglass of brandy. Beat the eggs to a froth and then add to them half a pint of new milk and mix the various ingredients. Let the mixture stand for twelve hours in a cool place. Then place in moulds and boil for eight hours. The above would make three ordinary-sized puddings.

shouts of delight, and spend some hours in the prettily-laid-out gardens there, smoking his cigar and watching the children at their play, entering into their enjoyment with obvious delight. Queen Alexandra once remarked that His Majesty was as "great a child as anyone," and his delight was unbounded when the news of the birth of the present Prince of Wales was announced to him.

His first action was to telegraph to the late Queen Victoria and request that the old-fashioned "bassinette" that had been used for himself and his brothers and sisters might be sent for the occupation of the new arrival. This is neither hung, as is the modern style, nor is on rockers. To it is affixed a silver plate with the inscription: "This bassinette was made for Victoria, Princess Royal (the late Empress Frederick of Germany), in 1840, and was used by all Her Majesty's children, and was given by the Queen to the Duchess of York in 1894." It was beautifully furnished for the use of the Prince. The sheets were of the finest Irish lawn, embroidered in the corners with the Royal Arms surmounted by the crown and trimmed with Valenciennes lace. The pillows were to match. The blankets were of white Yorkshire wool, likewise bearing the badge of the Royal Arms, and several eider-down quilts accompanied the gift. In this dainty cradle, by the way, each of the children of King George and Queen Mary has slept, and Her Majesty has passed many happy hours by its side. It has now been carefully stripped of its hangings and packed away until such time as the Prince of Wales can have it passed on to him.

As the children grew up, the interest of the late King Edward in them if anything increased, and he would willingly join them in a game of cricket, though this was a game at which he was never anything of an adept. Upon one occasion the present Prince of Wales and Prince Albert had organized a match on the "slopes" beneath Windsor Castle, where, many years ago, the late Prince Consort had a private ground laid out for the use of his sons, none of whom, however, with the exception of the Duke of Albany, showed much liking for the game. At the last moment King Edward was prevailed upon to take a place in the Prince of Wales's team in order to make the numbers equal. Good-humouredly he agreed to do so, provided that he was not called upon to field.

There was every prospect of a very close finish, and when there only remained His Majesty to bat little Prince Henry expressed his fear to Prince Albert that they were going to be beaten. "Pooh!" said the latter; "there is only grandpa to come, and I can bowl him any time." His words proved correct, for King Edward succumbed to the first ball sent down by his second grandson. Prince Albert, by the way, is the cricketer of His Majesty's sons, and one of his most treasured possessions is a ball, now mounted upon a silver stand,

PRINCE GEORGE. PRINCE ALBERT. PRINCE HENRY. THE PRINCE OF WALES.

From a Photograph by Ernest Brooks.

with which he once clean bowled with successive balls King George, the Prince of Wales, and Prince Arthur of Connaught.

Another day that is marked with red letters in the lives of the Royal children is that of the garden-party that is given for their youthful friends in the grounds of Buckingham Palace. This function was instituted at the request of Princess Victoria—"Auntie Vic," as she is always known to her niece and nephews. Her Royal Highness is passionately devoted to children, and when staying at Sandringham is frequently to be seen talking to the children of the tenantry. She is almost worshipped by the Royal children.

During the past summer Her Majesty was delighted to be able to go to Windsor or Frogmore and there spend a few happy days with her family, without any thoughts of public duties to concern her, while she greatly enjoyed her prolonged holiday at Balmoral, though she was rather disappointed that the Prince of Wales could not join the family gathering, owing to his naval duties on board the *Hindustan*. During this holiday it was Her Majesty's custom to sit in the open air with her needlework in her ever-busy fingers and her daughter, Princess Mary, close to her side, either engaged in sewing or knitting or reading a book, and watching her youngest son, Prince John, at play close at hand.

As a rule Prince Albert and Prince Henry were allowed to accompany the King upon his shooting expeditions, and the former had the great joy of bringing down his first stag during the time that he spent in the Highlands. This was, however, before the King and Queen arrived at Balmoral, and, by a most curious coincidence, took place upon the anniversary of the day that the Prince of Wales shot his first deer. The two heads, so soon as that brought down by Prince Albert has been suitably mounted, are to be placed side by side in the gun-room at Balmoral. This apartment is one of the most interesting of its kind in the world. It contains heads of stags brought down by many crowned heads, but perhaps those that attract the greatest amount of attention are those shot in turn by each of Queen Victoria's sons. These latest additions will be placed in close proximity to the first heads of the present King and the late Duke of Clarence and Avondale.

Boy-like, Prince Albert was immensely elated at his success, and, though the hour was comparatively early, he declined to go farther with the day's sport, and hastened home to write to his mother a full and graphic account of his feat.

Queen Mary is extremely anxious that the present happy home-surroundings of her children shall not be interrupted, and it was something of a wrench to her when the Prince of Wales left the home-circle to commence his duties as a naval cadet. She realized,

A ROYAL GARDEN-PARTY.
From a Photograph by Topical.

however, that the high position that His Royal Highness will, in all probability, be called upon to assume renders it necessary for him to be trained for his future career at a time when other boys are still in the schoolroom. Her Majesty, however, writes to her eldest son at considerable length at very frequent intervals, and this is a duty that she does not permit anything to prevent her from performing. In return, she exacts equally long letters from the young Prince, and she enters fully into everything he has to tell her of his life aboard ship.

QUEEN MARY, WITH PRINCESS MARY AND PRINCE JOHN.
From a Photograph by Ernest Brooks.

Her Majesty is a firm believer in the early home-training of children, and this she superintends in person. Every morning each of the Royal children at home is taken to her room, and there reads a portion of Scripture selected by the Queen. At the conclusion of this Her Majesty explains to them, in language suited to their years, the meaning of the passages, adding a few homely words to impress the lesson upon their youthful minds. When the Prince of Wales was being prepared for confirmation, the Queen devoted a great amount of time to this task, and upon the morning that he was created a Knight of the Garter she sent for him, and pointed out to him the responsibilities he was about to assume, and what a "knightly oath" implied. The religious training of the Princess Mary has been entirely assumed by her mother.

Each of the young Princes has been encouraged to regard their father more in the nature of an elder companion than merely as a parent. They take to him all their little troubles and grievances, and he does his best to smooth these and to help them with his advice and assistance. He holds that it is no part of a father's duty to be called upon to take any active part in their education or upbringing, and that this is best left to their mother, and he will not countenance anything in the nature of an appeal to him from a decision of the Queen. The Prince of Wales once got into rather serious trouble over this. He was quite little at the time, and he was rather anxious to go into the grounds of York Cottage one day, in order to play with some new toy that had just arrived. Her Majesty, however, deemed that the day was not suitable for her son to be out of doors, and told him as much. The young Prince was deeply disappointed at this, and went to his father to ask if he might go into the gardens. His Majesty was busy at the moment, and, without pausing to inquire the reason for the request, said he might; and off His Royal Highness went.

Presently the Queen saw him, and sent to know why he had disobeyed her. She was told that his father said he might go. Without saying anything further, she then sought out the King, and told him exactly what had happened. The King was very angry indeed, and, sending for his son, administered suitable chastisement, adding that it was not so much for his act of disobedience as for coming to him after his mother had given her decision. Needless to say, the Prince has never erred in this direction since.

When her two elder brothers were at home Princess Mary was permitted to share their schoolroom and, to a certain extent, their studies. It was something of a trouble to her when first the Prince of Wales and later Prince Albert were taken away to go to the junior division of the Royal Naval College at Osborne, and it is upon record that it took some little time to explain to her how

impossible it would be for her to follow them there.

From the moment they were old enough the King has believed in his children being allowed to take their share in every healthy form of sport and exercise. He is himself a firm supporter of what is generally known as "physical culture," and devotes himself to half an hour or so of this every morning. A favourite pastime with the young people when at Frogmore was boating on the Thames, and they were frequently to be seen in that part of the river known as the "Old Cut," the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert vigorously pulling a skiff and Princess Mary steering, with her long fair hair floating in the breeze. It was not long before the boys were able to handle the sculls with a considerable degree of proficiency, and it was an occasion of deep gratification to them when, one afternoon, the late King Edward and Queen Alexandra drove over from Windsor to witness their prowess, and subsequently bestowed suitable encomiums upon them.

PRINCESS MARY.
From a Photograph by Ernest Brooks.

In many respects Princess Mary is strikingly like her mother, and in none of these is this more to be noticed than in her distaste for any form of outdoor exercise. She is, however, the soul of amiability, and will often join her brothers in making up a four for lawn-tennis or in some other game, rather than they should be disappointed. Left to herself, however, she would greatly prefer to sit in a chair with a book or a piece of needlework in her hand. She has taken riding lessons with her brothers, but she has no liking for this, and is, indeed, rather nervous when on a horse. The young Princes, on the other hand, greatly like a canter round the riding-school at Windsor or in the Great Park, and the Prince of Wales was hugely delighted when he was first permitted to take the "jumps" in the school. He is now looking forward to his first day's experience of riding to hounds, and this is not likely now to be long deferred. He is absolutely fearless in his riding, and gives every promise of becoming as fine a horseman as his father.

The Royal children have often tried to coax their mother to join them in a round of golf upon the capital little private nine-hole course in the park at Windsor, or upon the more sporting links of Sandringham. These invitations have, however, always been resolutely declined by the Queen, who, as a matter of fact, has never had a club in her hand in her life.

Both the King and the Queen make it their daily business to see their children when at home, if only for a brief moment. No matter how many or how important the public duties of His Majesty may be, he always finds time to slip down either to the school-room or to their breakfast-room, in order to have a chat and a joke with them. He is insistent, however, that when engaged upon State duties he shall not be needlessly interrupted, and there are certain hours of the day when none of his family may approach him. So soon as the word is passed round, however, that the King has gone to his private apartments, they are free to come and go as they please. Princess Mary always takes her breakfast with the Queen, as do the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert during vacation times, and they will miss this meal greatly during the Christmas holidays.

At the funeral of the late King Edward, the Prince of Wales was greatly anxious to be allowed to ride in the procession through London, and he was not a little annoyed when the King refused to sanction this and he was ordered to ride in the carriage procession with his sister and brothers. When it was all over and the last sad rites had taken place, His Royal Highness turned to Prince Henry and said, "Well, I do not see why I was not allowed to have a horse; I am sure I should

have acquitted myself at least as well as a good many of those who were riding!" His Royal Highness is not a little proud of his horsemanship, so that his chagrin on this occasion may be understood.

It has often been said that a perfect husband and wife make a perfect father and mother. Without entering into any discussion as to the accuracy or otherwise of this assertion, it may be taken for granted that the happy home life of the Royal children is the result, to a very large extent, of the great affection and the deep mutual understanding that exist between the King and Queen. They make no secret of their devotion to each other, and have never done so. Shortly after his accession to the throne, His Majesty was asked by an old friend, during an after-dinner conversation, who, out of all his many advisers and assistants, had been of most service. "My wife," was the prompt reply. There was, moreover, nothing that savoured of affectation about this answer. Queen Mary is a very great help to His Majesty in his many State duties, and he has often found her sound advice very valuable when he has been at a loss to know which course to take in a matter.

So soon as the duties of the day are at an end, and the King prepares to go through the papers, letters, reports, and so forth that have reached him during the day, the Queen joins him and they will spend several hours together, perfectly happy in their mutual society, though, possibly, never exchanging a word. His Majesty has more than once been heard to confess that he can always work twice as fast and twice as well when Her Majesty is sitting with him, and this is certainly borne out by actual experience of those in the Households of their Majesties. Theirs is, indeed, a case of the sweetheart never being allowed to lapse into the merely married partner, and in this respect—as in several others—they set a worthy example to millions of their subjects.

There are many State duties that the King leaves almost entirely to Queen Mary, and among these is the decision as to who and who shall not be received at Court, and an instance of this was supplied only a few months ago. The list of the proposed presentations to a Court was submitted to His Majesty, before the formal "commands" were sent out by the officials of the Lord Chamberlain's department, to receive his signature. It was pointed out to him that the name of a certain lady, fairly well known in society, had been removed, and he was urged to restore it. "Her Majesty has removed it," said His Majesty, coldly, "and that is quite sufficient for me. Personally, I know nothing of the lady, but that is neither here nor there. She cannot be present in view of the Queen's decision."

It is, too, largely upon the suggestion of the Queen that the King arranges and revises his visitors' list. Her Majesty draws her line very high—as high, indeed, as ever did the late Queen Victoria; and many of those who were formerly in the habit of basking in the smiles of Royalty now find themselves out in the cold, and there has been considerable heart-burning in several quarters over this fact during the past twelve months.

Those who are constantly about the Court are greatly struck with the manner in which Queen Mary enters into matters of comparatively trivial interest. She examines the accounts of her Household most carefully, and will often mark off for further inquiries an item which does not quite meet with her approval. She had an excellent training in this direction under her mother, the late Duchess of Teck, whose right-hand she was for many years before her death. It is safe to say that never was a Royal *entourage* so economically administered as is that of King George. Nothing apparently escapes the eye of the Queen, and the weight of her displeasure is severely felt when she considers that there has been any waste or needless extravagance in any department of the Household.

The late King Edward once remarked that "there were a very good country squire and his wife lost in George and May," and there is a great amount of truth in this. Neither of them has the slightest liking for the pomp and circumstance of a Court, nor for town life at all. The King is happiest when he is able to lead the free and untrammelled life of a country gentleman; to manage the affairs of his estate, to see to the well-being of his tenantry, and to ride, shoot, and fish to his heart's content. Queen Mary, for her part, likes to concern herself with the conduct of her house and—above all—the training of her children. It is something of a sorrow to both of them that they are unable to devote as much time to these pursuits in their present exalted position as they could desire. Both have, however, a very strict sense of duty, and, no matter how great the temptation may be, they resolutely set on one side their private desires and devote themselves to the concerns of that mighty Empire over which the King rules.

"My ambition," remarked the King to a group of the members of his Household, shortly after he had ascended the Throne, "is to justify it being said of me what Lord Tennyson so justly said of my grandfather—'He wrought his people lasting good.'" It was in no perfunctory manner that His Majesty assumed the sovereignty of these realms, as an incident which took place upon that sad night when he became King testifies. When the news was formally conveyed to him that he was no longer Prince of Wales but King George V., and the principal personages about him had conveyed to him their assurance of their allegiance to his rule and their devotion to his person, he paused for a moment and, in a voice broken with emotion, said: "Gentlemen, I thank you all. Pray God I may prove worthy of the trust that is now imposed upon me." How far he has justified the ideals that he then set himself must be left to posterity to say. Certainly he has spared himself nothing, and has laboured hard and long to live up to that solemn oath he took in Westminster Abbey.

Both the King and the Queen are the soul of courtesy and consideration for those who serve them, and they never omit to reward any little office undertaken on their behalf with a pleasant smile and a kindly word. Many instances might be given, did space permit, in support of this. One, however, must suffice. Quite a minor official of the Court had occasion to approach His Majesty a few days after the Coronation with some papers that required the Royal signature. This appended, the official was about to leave the room, when the King called him back. "I hear you have had to work very long hours lately," said His Majesty. The official admitted that this had been the case. "Well, please accept my personal thanks for all you have done," the King went on. "Be assured that I shall not forget it, and though you will probably receive a tangible mark of my esteem, do not think that the matter is ended there. Those who serve me will find that I am no ungrateful master." The Royal words have come more than true. Not only did the official receive the Companionship of the Royal Victorian Order, but he has since been considerably advanced in the Household.

"It does one good to observe the domestic happiness of the King and Queen," remarked one of the most prominent personages about the Court, and this is true to the letter. Devoted to each other, the King and Queen have always a kindly thought for those less fortunate than themselves. It may be confidently asserted that for one kindly action which finds its way into print Her Majesty is the author of at least fifty others. Not so long ago, when she was Princess of Wales, Queen Mary made it her business to visit a bereaved widow in King's Lynn whose husband and only son had been drowned in their smack during a storm. "You will let me assist you from time to time, will you not?" asked the Queen, as she took her departure. "Remember I am, too, a sailor's wife." And of that fact she is probably more proud than anything else.

At the opening of this article it was said that only those who are about the Court can realize the close affection that exists between the Queen and her family. A fitting pendant to this is that only those so placed can truly realize the inherent sincerity of the cry which is so often raised, "God bless our King and Queen!"

PRINCE JOHN.
From a Photograph by Ernest Brooks.

Another most interesting article by the same writer on a subject connected with the Court will appear in our next number.

A Cut Knot

By C. C. ANDREWS.

Illustrated by C. E. Brock, R.I.

ALTHOUGH the day had dawned grey and heavy, it had not, in its first hours, been cold for the season. It was not until past noon that the temperature began to fall, and the evening was drawing on towards darkness when the first few flakes of snow came softly fluttering down—so near to darkness that Simon Gordon, driving home from his wedding with his newly-made wife at his side, had glanced about him more than once anxiously. It was not well that solitary or unarmed travellers should be abroad after nightfall upon the long roads that stretched between settlement and settlement, for this was the time when the old and the new country warred with each other, and the scarlet of King George's red-coats was in many places. It was true that in this, the neighbourhood of Detroit, General Harrison had beaten the British again and yet again, but they and their Indian allies lurked in the region still. Simon Gordon told himself that it was well that the ancient trap might almost have been that of any poor farmer but for the splendid cattle between the shafts. It was in deference to her own wish and will that he thus took home his bride, as simply as a farmer might do. Young Madam Gordon, mistress of the fine house at Lingfield, might ride abroad in her coach-and-four, if it so pleased her, or sit before her embroidery frame in a great room grand with tapestry and velvet and mahogany, with a dozen servants at her call, for Simon Gordon was the richest man for many miles round about; the money that his grandfather had brought over from England nearly a hundred years before had, in his skilful hands, thriven and multiplied exceedingly. But Deborah was poor, and proud with a rigid New England resolution, a pride so gently unbending that she had refused to take any gifts from her lover but his betrothal ring, and had bade him bring no fine coach to carry her home as his wife.

The snow fell fast, faster; one of the spirited team grew restive at some fancied shadowy obstruction in the way, suddenly backed, reared, plunged. Startled, Deborah caught at her husband's arm, and the trap, sluing abruptly across the road, came to a standstill with a jolt. Simon Gordon looked down at the face that peered, pale and beautiful, between the puckers of the velvet hood.

"You're frightened, sweetheart?"

"I am not. It was only for a moment. Simon, is it still very far?"

"Farther than I wish it—a good ten miles yet. We were late in starting—I feared as much. Had I guessed that the snow was so near we would have done so two hours earlier, and so have been safe in Lingfield by this. Hi! Go on, there!" Gordon cried, smartly.

The lashed horses swung into their tracks again, straining gallantly in the teeth of the strengthening wind. The snow, falling faster and faster, drifted beneath the cover, beat stingingly into Deborah's face in spite of her held-down head; lay thick upon her hood and shoulders and the bear-skin that covered her knees. With an exclamation Simon Gordon suddenly reined in.

"That's surely a house yonder?"

He pointed. A few yards ahead a narrow cart-track branched away from the road, leading through a broken fence to what seemed a rough patch of pasture-land. And beyond it, whitely outlined against the black of the tree-trunks that backed it, stood the house, a rambling structure surrounded by a yard and a low railing. Springing down, Gordon went to the horses' heads and led them towards it, ploughing through the deepening white that was already ankle-deep. In a moment Deborah, stiff, cold, hardly realizing, found herself lifted down, carried bodily up some steps, and placed in the welcome shelter of a deep porch.

Gordon knocked loudly. Neither it nor the call with which he followed it produced any reply. The door, like most doors of its class, was secured only by a latch; he lifted it and peered within. Such faint light as yet lingered revealed a large rough room like a kitchen, dismantled and disorderly; upon the wide hearthstone the remains of a fire still glowed red. He pointed to it.

"Whatever has taken them, they cannot have been gone long, that's plain. That was not a step above, was it? No—silent as the grave. Go you in, love, and sit down; it will be at least warmer than here. I must put the trap under the lean-to yonder, and unharness, and find food for the horses alone, it seems."

He pushed the door wider, but Deborah shrank back with a gesture of dissent.

"No, no," she said, quickly. "I will wait for you, Simon. I would rather not go in alone. I shall be quite sheltered here."

Gordon nodded, and went down the porch steps. Perhaps he heard the tremor in her voice, divined something of the nervous shiver that ran through her body. Drawing her cloak more closely about her she stood watching. The lean-to of which he had spoken stood across an angle of the great fenced yard, built, seemingly, against a side of the stables. Under a corner of it, as though it had wandered in from the pasture to seek protection from the storm, a dejected, unclipped horse stood, its head drooping and a broken halter-rope hanging down; in an outhouse close by a quantity of poultry were huddled together. Gordon backed the trap under the lean-to and led away the horses; in a few minutes he appeared again and came across the yard, carrying the bear-skin and rugs.

"That horse probably belongs here, poor beast; anyhow, I have stabled and fed him with the others. I'll bed the three of them down for the night presently. No sound or sign of anybody here, I suppose? Ah—I thought not. Come in, sweetheart."

He took her hand and drew her in, placing her in a great chair of patchwork cushions, vaguely visible by the hearth. A thrust of his boot-heel, stirring the smouldering embers of the fire into a momentary flame, showed a pile of logs beside the chimney; two or three thrown on caught and blazed quickly; the ruddy light, filling the room, displayed its state of wild confusion. Chairs were overturned, a smashed pitcher lay in a puddle of milk upon the flagged floor; a great trunk against the wall had half its contents dragged out, litter of all kinds was everywhere. Here, if signs were to be trusted, there had been frantic, distraught terror, desperate hurry, and headlong flight. The two apartments opening from it, the one a bedroom, the other a sitting-room where the logs in the stove were not yet dead, were in similar disorder. Glancing through their doorways, one of the candles that he had found and lighted held high, Simon Gordon came back grave-faced to Deborah.

"They have run away," she said.

"Aye—that's plain. Some alarm of the British near by no doubt. Come nearer to the fire, love, and let me take your cloak.

So! This is scarce the place in which I thought to bid my wife welcome, Deborah!"

He threw the cloak aside and said it with hands on her shoulders, his eyes ardent upon a face that in any must have been beautiful. Deborah's lustrous red-brown hair was twisted high round a great comb and fell in soft curls beside the lovely smooth oval of her cheeks; under the sweeping shade of their black lashes her velvet-brown eyes were brilliant; in her narrow-skirted, high-waisted wedding-gown of rich flowered brocade, whose low bodice and short-puffed sleeves left white neck and round arms bare, she showed a woman tall, strongly-slender, shapely, curiously girlish of air and aspect still. And he, with riding coat and hat thrown off, made a goodly match for her, for in his fine broadcloth wedding-coat and sprigged satin vest he stood near to six feet, and held his handsome head, which showed only a faint sheen of silver in its thick fair hair, as proudly erect as ever his courtier grandfather had done in the presence-chamber of the first King George. Simon Gordon was forty-five, but many a man twenty years younger made but a poor appearance beside his stately figure, as many a fair Lingfield maiden had turned shy eyes his way before his own had seen Pierce Henderson's young widow, and, doing so, had never again looked beyond her.

"The welcome is the same wherever it is spoken," said Deborah, softly. "Indeed I think so, Simon."

"Indeed, sweetheart, you may, since for me you make all places one." He bent and kissed her hand; he had many a courtly English trick of manner. "Do you remember that I have given you no wedding gift?"

"Wedding gift?" she echoed.

"Surely. The pearls you would not take until you should be made Deborah Gordon. I had meant to give them to you on the road—the storm put them out of my head. They were my mother's and my grandmother's, but once they are on your neck I am ready to swear that they have never decked so fair and proud a lady."

He laid the open case upon her knee. She glanced at the milky circle coiled upon the velvet and looked away.

"I will take them now, Simon," she said, softly and steadily. "I was, perhaps, ungracious to refuse before. But first I have something to give you."

Her hands were at her neck; from the folds of her gown she drew out a narrow black ribbon from which hung the half of a roughly-broken coin—a Mexican silver dollar. There was deprecation, almost doubt, in her face as she glanced from it to him; but, quick to divine, he met the look with no sign of wincing. There had been few mentions between them of the dead Pierce Henderson; but that the love he might win from her would match neither his own nor the one she had once given was a thing of which he had soon felt well assured. What then? Only a fool flung away the jewel for which his whole soul longed because another had first worn it.

"We broke it when we were first betrothed," she said, quietly. "His initials are upon this half, as you see, and mine were upon the other. It is the last thing that I have kept of his, but I'll do so no longer now that I am your wife. I—do not wish it. . . . This knot—'tis said to be one of those so intricate that only a knife-cut can undo it once it is made; and indeed I have never tried whether it might be unfastened. But I can break the ribbon." With a twist and jerk of her strong white fingers she did so and gave it to him, smiling faintly. "Take it, Simon, in exchange for your pearls. Think, if you like the fancy, that it most truly binds me to you as long as the knot holds. And oh, believe that I am happy and will love you dearly, my husband. With all my heart I promise it, and am grateful for your love for me!"

Perhaps she had never seemed younger, as she had never been more beautiful, than when, with her sudden, impulsive gesture, she turned and clung about his neck. He held her to him, his fair head bent down upon her brown hair, and so presently clasped the string of pearls upon the neck that could so well bear their whiteness, and gently put her from him.

"Were there but a mirror here it should show that they are less than worthy of their wearer," he said, looking at her proudly. "Now, love, stay you by the fire, and I will see what there may be found to eat, though I fear your wedding-supper promises to be as poor as the room."

A search of a few minutes brought to light bread and butter, cheese and coffee; a great pitcher of milk, a pile of Indian-meal cakes, and half of a huge venison pasty. Soon, with plentiful talk and jest and laughter between bride and groom, an abundant meal was spread upon the great bare, scrubbed table. To the whistle and scream of the wind, that hurled the snow noiselessly against the windows, the wedding-supper was eaten. Simon, rising presently, carried an armful of logs into the sitting-room and piled them upon the stove, as he had done once already. The

"TAKE IT, SIMON, IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR PEARLS."

place was snugly warm, and there was a great couch, not uncomfortable, he said, returning; with the rugs and bear-skin Deborah might make shift to pass the night with fair ease; he himself would get what sleep he could in the chair with the patchwork cushions. But that was presently; it was early yet; next he must go to the stable and bed down the horses. To which end he lighted a lantern taken from a shelf in a corner and slipped on his huge buff riding-coat. Deborah, watching, twisting the thick, dull-gold circle of her wedding-ring absently round and round upon her finger, started to her feet as he turned to the door.

"Surely I can help you, Simon. Let me."

"Help me? No, no. You would but soak your shoes and your gown, love. Stay here." He looked at her and fancied her pale. "Is it that you do not care to be left alone? See — take this for your protection, then. I'll not be long."

He laughed as he laid the pistol drawn from his pocket down upon the table, and with a nod went out. By the flickering gleam of the lantern Deborah from the window watched him plough his way through the snow to the stables. Doing so, the thought flitted through her head that the wind was not so violent and the whirling

flakes less fast and thick, that the fury of the storm was slackening. Beginning mechanically to set away the dishes in the vast, ice-cold larder whence they had been taken, she stood suddenly still, listening. Surely she had not been mistaken—Simon was calling her! Yes, there was the cry again. Oddly wavering, indistinct—but still a cry. But was it in Simon's voice—was it? She ran to the door and flung it open, peering forth. The sound came once more, but not from the stables; wild, weak, and hoarse, it was a cry for help! Straining her eyes through the glittering white dazzle towards the road, she saw the vague blackness of a struggling figure swaying beside the fence, and darted out upon the porch.

"Simon!" she cried aloud. "Simon—Simon!"

There was no answer. Plainly her call had not been heard. The cry came still again, feebler, more exhausted; the staggering dark shape clutching at the fence sank down, lay, was still. Deborah snatched and flung her cloak about her, and, with her flowered skirts gathered up, ran down the porch-steps. The soft snow was half-way to her knees. Calling to Simon again loudly, she somehow stumbled and struggled through it to the side of the prostrate figure. From the force of its fall it lay half-buried as in a white grave; she could see nothing but the shapeless blackness of a swathing cloak, the outline of a head and hand. Stooping, exerting all her strength, she strove to raise and turn it. Her fingers touched something warm and wet, and she shrieked, knowing that this must be blood. Her scream was answered in Simon's voice; she cried out in reply, calling to him wildly, and as she struggled to her feet, clutching at the fence, he was at her side.

"Deborah! Out here? Child, what possessed you? You will take your death! Why——"

"It is a man!" Deborah gasped. "I heard a cry for help, and looked out. I called to you, but you didn't hear me. He cried again and fell. He is hurt, wounded—there is blood on him. I tried to raise him, and got it on my hand. He is fainting, I think, or dead. See!"

She pointed. With only a glance at the huddled heap, Gordon caught her up—his great strength could have lifted more than her weight easily, though it was no slight thing—and, heedless of her protests, carried her across the yard, through the kitchen, and into the sitting-room, setting her down upon the couch beside the hot stove. She held his sleeve with a shiver; the firelight showed the stain that had dyed her fingers red.

"If he should be dead!" she faltered. "Simon, do you think he is dead?"

"No, no. It is most likely a swoon from loss of blood and exhaustion," he answered, soothingly. "Dry your shoes and skirts, love—the cold must have chilled you through. I will bring him in."

He hurried out. Careless of her soaking feet, she ran to the window, and saw him through the eddying snow-whirl make his way back across the yard and stoop over the prone figure beyond the fence. Dimly, straining her eyes eagerly, she made out that he lifted it with what seemed a huge effort, and came slowly, swaying and staggering, back again. The horrible inertness of it made her shudder afresh. Surely only death could hang in his arms so limply, utterly still! She heard him re-enter the kitchen, and presently opened the door without advancing from it.

"He is dead, Simon?" she asked, fearfully. "Is he?"

"Dead? No, no!" He heard the shake in her voice and made his cheerfully full, not turning from the great chair and what lay in it. "It is a faint—he will revive directly."

"But he is wounded. Is it a shot?"

"Aye; a musket-ball in the side. In itself it is not much, I think; but he has lost more blood than he could spare. Go back to the fire, sweetheart. I can do all that's needful."

He did not speak without warrant, for in those days men had frequent need of medical and surgical skill, and he possessed his share. The wound he bathed now and dressed and bandaged with some fragments of old linen taken from the open trunk against the wall was not the first he had so doctored by many. To the fact of its infliction he gave hardly a thought; at that time a lonely traveller on the roads might well chance to take a stray bullet, and never know whence it came—from native outpost or British picket. Nor at the long outer cloak did he glance twice. But at the clothing revealed beneath as he drew it away he stared with a start and a tightened mouth, before, almost for the first time, he turned his eyes upon the face.

Still rigid in insensibility, death-white beneath its sweep of black hair, it was, in its dark-browed, clear-cut regularity of feature, not only unusually handsome, but seemed little more than the face of a boy. An overturned brass skillet lay on the hearth; in it

Gordon heated some milk from the pitcher, poured it into a cup, added a goodly portion of fine Hollands from a flask taken from his pocket, and lifting the head, succeeded, after an effort or two, in making the senseless man swallow. Doing so for the third or fourth time his dark eyes flashed open, for a moment stared blankly, then, with a hoarse, wordless ejaculation, he tried to struggle up on his feet.

"Steady!" said Simon Gordon, cheerfully, and set the cup down. "No need for hurry—take time. You were wounded—fainted. Don't you recollect?"

"Recollect?" The other stared at him—stared round the room. "What—what place is this? Where am I?" He started up. Gordon's great arm round his shoulders seated him deftly in the chair again.

"What place? Faith, that's more than I can tell or know, since I came in for shelter from the storm and found it empty, the poor souls owning it having fled from some false alarm of the British at hand, I take it. It is true, I believe, that they and their allies are not so far off as I would have them. Drink this. It is the best thing the place offers, and will put a little strength into you. You saw the light from the windows, did you not?"

"Yes." He put down the empty cup, having drained the contents eagerly. "I was nearly done when I saw the light—frozen to the bones, almost fainting. I—I struggled to get to the fence, I think—and called. Did I call?"

"And loudly, or you would have been lying now where you fell. It is the merest chance that you were heard. Had you not been—well, it did not happen. May I ask your name?"

"My name?" The frown of the dark brows was as momentary as the swift suspicious glance, the pause hardly longer; but Simon Gordon, attentive, noted all three. "Well, why not, sir? You have saved my life, it seems, and I have a special reason, it so chances, for meaning not to die. I am Henry Prince, and gratefully at your—— What's that?"

"HE IS FAINTING, I THINK, OR DEAD. SEE!"

A sudden sweeping gust of wind had set door and window rattling violently. With his cry he had sprung to his feet; in an instant the pistol, which Deborah had left lying untouched upon the table, was cocked in his hand. Looking at the dilated eyes the haggard, desperate face, Gordon, with a hand upon his shoulder, pressed him back into the chair, and took the weapon from him.

"It is the wind—there is nothing more—neither men nor horses. When did you desert?" he asked, quietly

"Desert?—I——?"

"Aye—desert. Man, do you suppose me blind? What else should bring you to this pass upon the road—wounded, flying, wearing the uniform that shows what you are? I say that you are a deserter from General Harrison's force. Is it not so?"

"Yes," said Prince, and set his handsome face doggedly. "There is small good in lying, sir, and I don't take kindly to it. You are right—I deserted this morning."

"And were seen? Followed?"

"Yes. By cursed ill-luck I was seen by a picket-sentry. He challenged. I ran, and got this bullet in consequence. But for it and the storm I would have been miles farther on the road by now. But that I know the country, and doubled back and lay hidden, they would have had me in the first half-hour. I neither saw nor heard any sign of them, but they may have picked up my tracks even before the snow began." He laughed. "There are reasons, you see, why they would guess I should head this way."

"What?" Gordon cried, and flung the pistol down. "A reason? This way? The way to the British camp? Is that the story? You have not only deserted but you carry information to the enemy and their devilish redskins! You villainous young traitor! Had I known it, I swear that you should have lain and died where you fell, for me!"

"If I were that sort of skunk I should deserve to do it and to rot on a dunghill afterwards!" the other retorted, hardly less hotly, and flushing red over his gaunt face. "I'm not such a cur as that, sir, though it's what I shall safely enough get the credit for—I know that—or have got it by this time, it's most likely. Desert to the enemy? Not I? You would not do more to send them back whence they came than I would—trust me!"

"And yet you deserted? Why?"

"Why?" He laughed again. "What do we do most things in life for—good and bad? A woman."

"You mean——"

"I mean that I had to see her, sir. Had to, you understand. We quarrelled and parted four years ago—my fault—I was a jealous idiot and fool. I have always managed to hear of her—never mind how. I should have run off my head altogether but for doing that, I think. I deserved all I got, I suppose. I'm not the first who has suffered hell for abusing heaven. It got so that I couldn't stand it any longer—no, by Heaven! not for an hour. I say I had to see her! If I had known that my capture was certain, I should still have run!"

"If you are taken——"

"It means my back to the wall and a bullet through my head! Yes—I know!"

"Even should you escape for the present it will but defer the danger. If you remain in the State——"

"I shall not. My plan, so far as I have one, is to reach the Dominion. I have relatives and friends in Toronto and Quebec. So has she. We shall be safe enough there. We—we will contrive it somehow, once I—can get to her. She—she will come."

His voice had been failing more and more weakly; as his head sank back against the cushions his face showed ghastly white; his eyes closed as though he were on the brink of drifting again into a swoon. Gordon poured out more of the Hollands, made him drink, and presently, after a soothing sentence or two, went into the bedroom opening from the kitchen. The casual glance that he had taken round it had shown him various men's garments hanging from pegs in the wall. He brought them in and put them down.

"Once a thing is done it is waste of breath to talk of its folly," he said, bluntly. "That you are young, Mr. Prince—though I take it that you are not so young as I fancied—is, I suppose, the best excuse for you. I doubt if your sweetheart will give you many thanks for thus losing your honour and deliberately putting your life in jeopardy for a mere whim; and that you would have shown better sense and courage had you waited until you could have gone back to her honourably I take leave to tell you. Plainly, had things been as I suspected, you might have run the risk of capture as best you could for me, even had I not done my best to ensure that you met with it. But a hot-headed runaway is one thing and a traitor is another. What can be done in the morning, the morning will show; for the present we are equally lucky in our different ways to be under shelter. In the meantime the sooner you get rid of that wet clothing the better, for more reasons than one. I'll leave you to change here by the fire and take some food. I'll slip the bolts and draw the curtains. If you should hear——"

"Ah! What's that?" cried Prince. "There is someone there!"

On his feet again with the words, he turned almost as swiftly as before towards the second door—that of the sitting-room. The sounds that suddenly came from it were only slight—merely a creak, as of a chair pushed back, and a rustle as though Deborah had crossed

the floor. Gordon, with a quieting gesture, moved that way.

"No one to alarm you. My wife," he said.

"Your wife! I—I thought you were alone. Will—will she——"

"Harm you? Pshaw!—no, man!" With his hand on the door, he half laughed. "Why, it is she you have to thank for the fact that you are not lying frozen out yonder. It was she who heard you call and saw you—not I."

He opened the door and entered, closing it behind him. Deborah, standing at the window peering out, let the coarse curtain fall and turned to him quickly.

"The snow has ceased," she said, "and the wind is dropping. Simon, surely the roads will be impassable in the morning?"

"For our trap? I hope not. Should they seem so, there is a sled in the stables. You have dried your gown, love?"

"Yes, most carefully." She spread out the narrow, flowered breadths, smiling. "See, I am but little the worse, either in shoes or skirts. You should have let me help you, Simon. I sat here and listened, thinking that perhaps you would call to me; I should have come uncalled but that I knew the poor man had recovered his senses—I could hear your voices. The wound is not serious? You are sure? How did he get it? Did he tell you his name?"

"Yes. It is Henry Prince."

"Prince? There are Princes in New Milton; I have heard that they have relatives in Lansing. He may belong to them. And his wound, Simon? How came that? Does he know who fired at him?"

"He knows—yes." He hesitated. "I had best tell you, love. He is a deserter."

"Simon!" She started back. "A deserter!"

"No less. I suspected and taxed him with it, and he did not deny. Could not, since his uniform betrayed him. He deserted from Harrison's force this morning, was seen and fired upon by a sentry. But he has contrived to evade pursuit, it seems, or he would hardly have got so far. His wound and the storm remembered, there's small wonder that he swooned. Had you not chanced to hear his call he would probably have been dead by this, as I have told him."

"A deserter! And pursued! If they find and take him he will be shot!" she cried in horror.

"Aye—with short shrift, as he knows. And he's a handsome lad, too good for such a bullet, for all his folly. It seems he had some reason why he must see his sweetheart, and, like a young hothead, waited for nothing. A poor excuse for smirched honour and risked life, as I have also told him. But I fear I must needs feel tender towards that folly, Deborah!"

His hand was caressing her cheek, her hair; she laid her own upon the other as it rested on her shoulder.

"You will help him away, Simon? You will not give him up?" she said, eagerly.

"In the morning, yes, since it must be. A man could hardly give up to certain death a lost dog that had crept to his door. There is nothing can be done to-night, nor is he fit to be moved until he has had food and rest and sleep. He is exhausted."

"From loss of blood—yes." She glanced at the fingers which had been stained, and shuddered. "Simon, how strangely things happen! The chance of our being here—such a chance—has saved his life."

"That's certain. He saw the light from the window and struggled to reach it, it seems. . . . It is growing late and your eyes are heavy. You think you can rest here, on the couch?"

"Oh, yes. I shall do very well until morning. I am too tired not to sleep. And you?—and he?" asked Deborah.

They would both also do very well, since there was the great chair for himself and the bed in the third room for the other, Gordon answered, and took her into his arms to say good-night. Throughout their courtship she had never refused or repulsed his caresses, had received them always with a delicate shrinking and reticence, such as a shy and newly-wooed girl might have shown, and when now she raised her lips to his it was with her first unsolicited and voluntarily-given kiss. It was with his heart beating like a boy's that he in a moment left her standing in the firelight with the faint tremulous blush upon her face and the white circle of his pearls upon her neck. Oh, a man who was a man could win what his heart was set upon in spite of silvering hair and another man dead! To yield before persistence, to love where she was loved, was in the very grain and nature of a woman! He closed the door, holding up his handsome head, squaring the broad shoulders upon which the years had never rested so lightly. Then his eyes fell upon the chair by the fire, and he crossed the room softly, seeing from its relaxed attitude that the figure in it slept. The discarded blue uniform, lying in an untidy heap, entangled his feet; he gathered it up, carried it into the bed-chamber and

threw it down. Something, as he lifted it, had fallen upon the flags with a sharp metallic tinkle; returning, involuntarily glancing down, he saw some small object that glittered in the firelight, and picked it up—the half of a broken silver coin from which a black cord hung. He looked at it, turned it over, saw the two letters roughly cut upon the other side, and there was a roar in his ears as of a crashing and tumbling world.

Simon Gordon stood very still and looked at the man in the chair, sleeping with his face upturned. Slowly, stiffly, he presently moved; slipping a hand into a pocket of his vest, drawing out what it held—the half of the Mexican silver dollar that Deborah had taken from her neck. He put the two broken edges together, and they fitted, close and firm. He had known that they would thus fit. He looked at the initials upon this last half, H.P.—P.H.—Henry Prince—Pierce Henderson! He put the two halves aside, the one on the table, the other in his pocket, and looked at the man again—his exhausted sleep was very sound. He bent over him, not touching him, cautiously.

"Henry," said Simon Gordon, in a low, clear, carefully-held voice—"Henry Prince!" The sleeper did not stir. "Pierce," continued Simon Gordon as before—"Pierce Henderson!" The sleeper started up.

"What's that?" he cried aloud, and stared with wild eyes into the face of Simon Gordon, at which, indeed, he might well stare, for when his death hour came it would be little more changed or whiter. "Someone called me!"

"No. It was a dream," said Simon Gordon.

"A dream? I thought I heard my name." He stood up, pushing back his black hair, and looked about the room confusedly. "I—I could have sworn I heard it spoken at my ear. What—what's that in your hand?"

"It fell from your clothes—I picked it up. A love-token, I think? From your sweetheart, perhaps? May I ask her name?"

"Her name? Deborah. A love-token? Yes—I've worn it day and night since we broke the coin between us, but if she has kept her half it is as much more than I deserve as she herself is. Sweetheart, you say? She's my wife."

"Ah!" said Simon Gordon, standing in the shadow. "Your wife!"

"Yes." He slipped the cord about his neck and the bit of broken silver out of sight. "I should like to tell you, sir, if only to the end that you may think no worse of me than is needful. You believe I deserted—lost my honour and risked my life—for a whim. No! no! I heard that she was to marry again."

"She believed—she has believed you dead?"

"Yes. I told you we quarrelled and parted—my fault, all of it. I was a jealous, mad,

"'HENRY,' SAID SIMON GORDON, IN A LOW, CLEAR, CAREFULLY-HELD VOICE—'HENRY PRINCE!'"

unjust fool, and she was proud—proud as she had a right to be. It's all in that. And we were both young. But, whatever I was or am, I swear I loved her. There's no man could be her husband for a year, as I was, and not love her. Yes, she has thought me dead. The chance of letting her think so—of letting her, as she thought, prove so—came a month after we had parted, while my insane devil's temper had still got me. I took it—idiot and scoundrel!—and patted my coward's back to think that I had punished her. Her—an angel—my wife! I heard that she was to marry again—soon—Deborah! I had never thought of that. Could you have borne it? Borne to think that she, your own——" He flung out a hand towards the shut door. "Oh, you have been young, sir—you have a wife! You know what a man can feel for a woman!"

"Yes, I have been young; I have a wife; I know what a man can feel for a woman," said Simon Gordon, slowly, looking at the door.

"I went near mad, I think. I dared not trust a letter. With the country up as it is, who knew that it would reach her? And there was no time to lose; I ran for it—as I would again to-morrow for the same reason. Deborah with another husband! My wife!" He laughed.

"You think she will forgive you?"

"Think? I know it! Think! When such a woman as she is has cared for a man as she did for me there's no forgetting for her. Not because I deserve it—dolt and brute!—but because she's herself. Let the other man be what he may, I've but to see her and she's mine again, though I go to her barefoot, as I shall near do. . . . Well, sir, you understand now why I——"

"Hark!" said Simon Gordon.

He swung about towards the window—listened. Then with a stride reached it, and drew the curtain half-way back. Clear in the cold light of the risen moon, black against the white dazzle of the muffling snow, figures, men and horses—soldiers—were crossing the patch of pasture beyond the fencing of the yard. The officer, riding in advance, whose loud cry of "Halt!" had broken the frozen silence, was at the gate. Simon dropped the curtain and turned about, meeting the other's eyes with a look that spoke. Henderson started forward.

"Harrison's men? They've run me down, then! You'll not betray me, sir? For her sake! Oh, in fight I could take a bullet and show myself no cur! But in cold blood! To leave her! It is only a word I ask for. Knowing nothing, they will need no more. They can know nothing, since the snow must have buried my tracks an hour ago. There's the call again!"

He was gone into the inner room. Gordon stood looking at the shut door, then at the other that he had shut upon Deborah, standing in the firelight. He saw the pearls on her neck, the blush on her cheeks, the smile on the lips curved warm from her kiss. Again he was very still. Then he moved softly to this door and locked it, listening. There were sounds outside—a subdued mutter of voices. It was well that they were subdued, because she would not hear; neither, seeing that she no doubt slept, would she hear if presently—— A word? Why, none was needed. A dumb tongue, a nod, a pointed finger—they would be enough. And how should it much concern Simon Gordon's wife if the deserter, Henry Prince, traitorously carrying news to the enemy, were shot against a wall? It would be done and over before she knew. A dead man had no claims. And the weak, selfish young fool had left, deserted, lied to her; had——

A knock came upon the door, loud, peremptory. A pointed finger and a nod—no more was wanted! He had given no pledge. "You'll not betray me? For her sake!" The knock was repeated. Simon Gordon squared his shoulders with a gasp like a man who struggled from drowning water, strode to the door, drew the bolts, and flung it open.

The porch was filled by a little knot of men; a cluster of others held the horses in the yard. The officer, stamping the clogged snow from his feet, made a movement of salute and stepped in.

"Your pardon," he said, and glanced about with bright eyes sharp and keen. "We are from General Harrison's force, sir, and in pursuit of a deserter who made off this morning, carrying, we take it, information to the enemy, since he took this way, which is the direct road to their camp. He was seen, fired at, and wounded, but managed to give us the slip and hide his tracks until he reached Ware's Centre. It seems clear that he passed through there about an hour before dark, shortly after the snow began. Your house is the next upon the road—he must either have reached or passed it. If you should have seen him, or should have given him shelter——"

"Your pardon, sir—you mistake," Simon Gordon interrupted. "This is not my house. I was driven to take shelter here by the storm,

"THE OFFICER, STAMPING THE CLOGGED SNOW FROM HIS FEET, MADE A MOVEMENT OF SALUTE AND STEPPED IN."

my horses turning restive. They are in the stable, and my conveyance under the lean-to yonder, as you may see. The people, I judge, must have been alarmed by some tale of the British at hand, and so fled in a panic. I found the place deserted."

"Deserted? Empty?"

"Empty."

"And you have seen no one pass? You cannot help us?"

"I have seen no one pass. I cannot help you. It may be, sir, that you will know my name as that of one not likely to harbour traitors—Simon Gordon, of Lingfield."

beasts in chase of a rascal who may very well be buried in a snow-drift and frozen stiff as a ramrod by this. I shall be put to it to get them safe to camp. I should have turned my men back at the dip in the road below but for seeing your lights. My thanks for your courtesy, Mr. Gordon. And good-night."

The soldiers tramped down the steps; the officer followed. As presently they rode slowly out of the yard Simon Gordon closed the door and drew the bolts. Then he crossed to the other door and opened it, and Henderson caught him by the hand.

"They are gone!" he cried. "You have

"I DARE NOT STAY HERE ALONE WITH HIM—I AM AFRAID."

"It is a name well known and honoured. The State has much for which to thank its owner," said the officer, with a bow. "You do not fight with us, Mr. Gordon?"

"I fought when I was young. My day is past—I grow old," said Simon Gordon, smiling. "I regret, sir, that I can show you no hospitality in this poor place. Should you honour me at Lingfield I will offer you a different welcome. For the present, if you purpose to ride farther——"

"Farther? To-night? Not I, sir. My horses are fagged and blown already, and I have no mind to break the hearts of good

saved me—you have saved her! She shall thank you—I'll send her to you—she will speak for me as I never can for myself! Oh, you'll let me know your name, sir? There will never be another like it for either of us. She shall tell you so when she knows—when she—she——"

The high-pitched, quavering voice broke as he staggered and clutched at the wound in his side. Simon Gordon caught the swooning figure as it dropped and laid it gently down upon the bed.

Deborah, stirring upon her hard couch,

opened drowsy eyes and looked about the poor strange room, perplexedly. All confused with sleep, it was a minute before, slowly recalling, remembering, she pushed away the bearskin rug that covered her and slipped down upon her feet, standing tall in her rich flowered wedding-gown, and shivering with her bare arms and neck in the chill, snow-whitened light of the new morning. Her eyes turned to the window—the curtain was half drawn aside. Was it a dream that, awakened last night by the rumble of hoarse voices, she had peered out and seen soldiers and their horses gathered in the yard, had watched them as they rode away? No—no—of course no. She had gone to the door, had found it locked, had called to Simon to know what had happened—had they taken the fugitive man? No, he had presently answered her, the man was safe, and had bade her gently to sleep in peace. She had spoken again, but he had not replied, and so she had dropped asleep to the sound of his feet pacing the flagged floor of the outer room. Was he there now, waiting for her? The door was unlocked, and she pushed it wide. The red embers of the fire glowed hot upon the hearthstone, but the great chair beside it was vacant. She stood still.

"Simon!" she cried. "Simon! Where are you?"

In the silent emptiness of that lonely place the call rang loud, but no sound answered it. Glancing about her, wondering, her eyes fell upon the door of the third room, which stood ajar—that was where the man lay, the deserter whom his merciful silence had saved from death—he would be there. She softly pushed it open—peered in, went in, and in a moment, with a ringing cry, came running out again, rushed to the outer door, and flung it back. Out upon the porch, trampled black by the soldiers' feet, she stared about her wildly. Under the sloping roof of the lean-to, crested thick with snow, the trap and horses stood harnessed, ready, waiting. And farther, almost at the gates, a stately cloaked figure upon the sorry nag that had wandered in from pasture last night—— She darted down the steps.

"Simon!" she cried again. "Simon! Where are you going? Don't leave me! Come back!"

There was a frantic insistence of terror in the cry, and Simon Gordon, hearing, stopped and turned. He swung himself out of the saddle, and she clutched him, raising a face as white as the drawn and haggard one with which he looked at her.

"Don't leave me," she panted again. "The nearest house is so far away, and you may be able to find nobody who will come. A little time can't matter now, or leaving him alone. Wait, and take me with you in the trap. I dare not stay here alone with him—I am afraid!"

"You have seen him?" Gordon exclaimed, hoarsely. "Seen him?"

"Yes—no—not his face. I left it covered, and there was no need. I thought you were in the room, and went in, and when I could not hear his breathing, touched his hand." She shuddered violently. "Oh, the cold of it! Simon, when did he die?"

As he had done last night, Simon Gordon caught her up and carried her in, placing her in the great chair where, also last night, he had watched, while his ruined world crashed about him, Pierce Henderson sleeping with his face upturned—his handsome, weak, boy's face. A stride took him into the inner room—confounded, incredulous, he bent over what he had left a sleeping man. He touched the icy hand, uncovered the face, saw the red stream that ran from the rigid mouth, and understood. Excitement, fear, exhaustion, cold, exposure, had done their work; a vessel upon the lungs had broken and, unconscious, unknowing, he had passed from sleep to death. He covered the face and closed the door. Deborah dropped the hands with which, she had hidden her eyes.

"Poor fellow!" she said, with shaking lips. "His wound must have been worse than you thought it. And that poor girl, his sweetheart! Oh, Simon, I am sorry for her!"

He took her into his arms as she sobbed, and held her. She would never know why he had been riding away, why the trap and horses stood harnessed and ready, why, in her own dainty bag of brocaded satin, lying here upon the rough table, there was that roll of bank-notes and purse of gold. Still less would she know why near it lay the broken half of the Mexican silver dollar on its ribbon, the knot slashed clear and clean in twain—he put out his free hand and closed the fingers upon this. A knot was cut, but not the one his knife had severed, a symbol that the bond that tied her to him was broken. Perhaps as he clasped her and felt the clinging of her arms he had some forevision of the future day when, with his child upon her bosom, she would whisper that the love he had won had blotted out all but a gentle memory of the love whose place it took. She would never know, and he had played the man, he humbly thanked Heaven, and could meet her eyes unflinchingly.

Spooring.

By R. I. POCOCK, F.R.S.,

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LONDON ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

N his search for an attribute distinctive of man as compared with other animals, a learned sage, so the story goes, could find none exclusively restricted to the human species but the art of cooking. Hence arose the unflattering definition, "man is a cooking animal." Although this definition remains to the present day perfectly sound, it may be truthfully extended by the addition of the epithet "spooring." Spooring, properly speaking, means following footprints; but the term commonly implies much more than that, and signifies holding the trail by means of the many marks an animal leaves behind on its path. It is essentially tracking by sight when the quarry itself is hidden from view; and it is this use of the eyes alone in the pursuit of invisible game that distinguishes man, the hunter, from other animals. There is no reason to think that any animal, other than man, employs eyesight to any material extent for this purpose. Conspicuous tracks, it is true, may catch the eye of the stoat or wolf questing for prey, and draw attention to the fact that a possible victim has passed by; but it is hardly to be believed that either of these animals, high though in certain particulars his intelligence be, has a knowledge of the shape and structure of the feet such as is necessary for telling the nature of the species that has left the spoor and of the direction it has taken. These essentials are learnt by the sense of smell. Smell will tell the stoat if the tracks are those of a hare it would be profitable to pursue or of a fox it would be unwise to follow; and the gradual waxing or waning of the scent in this or that direction will indicate the course that has to be chosen if the quest is to be crowned with success.

To man alone, then, is confined the power of knowing these things by eye. Not that the knowledge is instinctive. It has to be acquired by strenuous application and long practice; and only the individual with keen visualizing power and sound judgment can hope to make a successful tracker and attain proficiency in the science. For learning the nature of animals, and other things about them, from their footprints is truly a branch of natural science which long ago received the name "ichnology." Probably not one tracker or sportsman in fifty is aware of the dignity thus conferred upon the subject, for the term in question was first invented by those interested, not in living but in extinct species; that is to say, by geologists whose hobby it was to interpret the footprints left by animals along coast-lines and river-beds and preserved in the hardened sandstone and shale of the sedimentary rocks.

A little reflection on man's past history will show how it came about that he evolved into a "spooring" animal. His immediate predecessors were not predaceous beasts. They were half-arboreal, half-terrestrial, gregarious ape-like creatures, subsisting mainly upon fruits, roots, and leaves, with perhaps birds' eggs and possibly insects, small reptiles, and mammals, that could be easily caught by the hand, introduced by way of variety. With powers of smell probably no keener than they are in man at the present time, this half-human species could not track by scent, even if prompted to do so; and this disability has persisted through the long history of the human race. But as soon as man assumed the ascendency over other animals by reason of his growing intelligence, which taught him, amongst other things, the use of weapons and the value of concerted action; and as the rapid increase in population called for extension of the sources of food supply, he was soon induced to turn his attention to the larger game that abounded around him. For the pursuit of this the exceptional keenness of sight, which in a measure compensates for deficiency of smell in all primates, stood him in good stead; and skill in tracking became so important a factor in the struggle for existence that special attention was paid to it, and knowledge of the subject was gradually accumulated by practice and handed on by tuition from father to son. In this way the art has come down from primitive man to savages of the present day. In our civilized states the actual knowledge, so useful of yore, has long been forgotten as useless; but the aptitude to learn which was cultivated by our

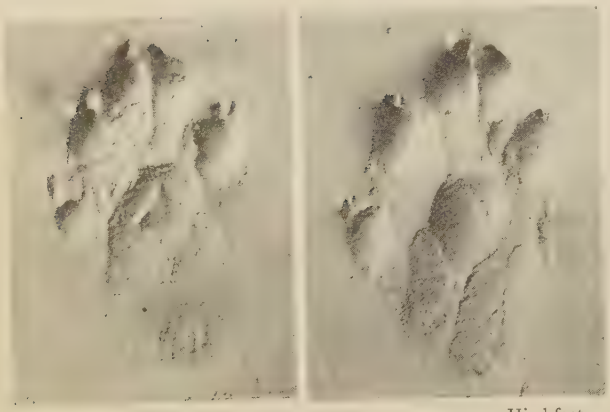
savage predecessors still prevails, and many a white man, aided by education and superior judgment, can, with practice and application, attain a skill in spooring but little inferior to that of native hunters. That savages are, on the average, better trackers than white

AFRICAN RHINOCEROS.
From a Drawing by Capt. Stigand.
From "Central African Game and Its Spoor" (Horace Cox).

men is generally conceded; but this truth must not be hastily ascribed to their being innately keener of sense and more observant of signs. Rather is it due to the accident of tracking being a part of their education started in the receptive period of boyhood, whereas in the case of the sportsman of European race the necessary education does not, as a rule, begin till his entry to the wilds as a grown man. Probably, indeed, there is not much to choose between the various races of mankind so far as tracking capacity, inborn in all, is concerned; but the degree to which this power is individually fostered will naturally depend upon the special needs of each particular tribe. Those that are in touch with civilization and share the food the white man offers in exchange for service will have less need to pay attention to the subject than those that are dependent for a living upon what they can catch and kill. So, too, will the knowledge it is necessary to acquire vary with the country and its fauna. Eskimos, for instance, have little to learn in this respect as compared with natives of Central Africa or hill tribes of India, though all three may be dependent in the same degree upon an acquaintance with the animals of the districts they live in. The number of species inhabiting the Arctic regions is comparatively small; and those that are met with, like the Polar bear, glutton, wolf, caribou, or musk-ox, can be readily differentiated by their spoor; but within tropical latitudes there are numbers of species which leave somewhat similar spoor. It is evident, therefore, that the richer is the fauna of a country, the greater are the difficulties to be overcome by the tracker.

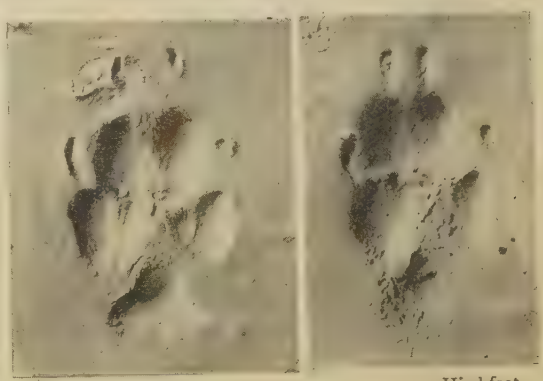
The knowledge required to distinguish the spoor of animals remotely allied amounts to very little. No mammal, for instance, leaves the three-toed track characteristic of birds; and amongst mammals themselves the footprints of species which divide the hoof and chew the cud cannot be confused with those of the large carnivora that prey on them. In other cases, however, even where there is no close relationship to confuse the issue, a somewhat more intimate acquaintance with the structure of feet is required. Many a sportsman new to the art might be puzzled at first to tell the tracks of a rhinoceros from those of a hippopotamus on a muddy river-bank in East Africa. In point of size there is little to choose between the imprints. The tracks, however, are in reality very unlike one another, for the rhino belongs to the group known as the "uneven-toed" hoofed animals—the feet, that is to say, are provided with only three toes, one of which is in the middle of the foot in front; while the hippo is one of the "even-toed" hoofed animals—the foot, in other words, is furnished with four toes, and the middle of the foot in front is occupied by the deep angular notch between the two middle toes. These structural characters, of course, come out clearly in well-marked spoor.

HIPPOPOTAMUS.
From a Drawing by Capt. Stigand.
From "Central African Game and Its Spoor" (Horace Cox).



Fore-foot. OTTER. Hind-foot.

Considerably more than a casual familiarity with the feet is, however, needed to distinguish the tracks of species belonging to the same group. This may be illustrated by the case of the four largest members of British indigenous carnivores, the badger, otter, fox, and wild cat, the tracks of any one of which might be seen in some parts of Great Britain round a farmyard or game preserve if one of these animals had been prowling about at night in search of prey. To be strictly accurate, I should have said might have been seen formerly, before the approaching extermination of the wild cat had restricted this species to its present fastnesses in the Grampian Hills. But even in districts whence the wild cat has disappeared, his place as a poacher is commonly taken by strayed domestic cats of equal destructiveness. There is no marked inequality in size between the four species in question; and without some knowledge of the structure of their feet the farmer or gamekeeper would be puzzled to identify the species from its spoor. Yet the identification would be of practical value, because he would thereby know that there was little to fear if the intruder were a badger, and that much more stringent precautions would have to be taken to exclude a fox or cat than an otter, on account of the greatly superior leaping and climbing powers of the former animals. Now, these four species belong to two different sections of the carnivores, which, by their difference in gait, used to be called the plantigrada, or sole-walkers, and the digitigrada, or toe-walkers, the otter and badger belonging to the first and the fox and cat to the second category. This difference in the way of walking comes out at once in the spoor, for the badger and the otter show the impress of five toes on each foot, whereas in the fox and cat only four toes mark the ground, the first, or "dew-claw," being carried well above it in the fore-foot, while it is, as a useless structure, completely absent in the hind-foot. The next step would be to distinguish the two types of plantigrade and digitigrade spoor respectively from each other. This, too, would not be difficult. In the case of

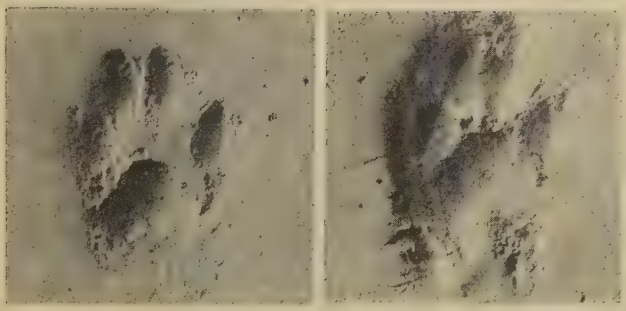


Fore-foot. FOX. Hind-foot.

the plantigrade species, whereas the claws of the otter are quite short and leave but an insignificant dent, those of the badger, especially on the fore-feet, which are used for digging, are remarkably long and strong and leave conspicuous dents in front of the casts of the anterior pads. Again, in the case of the fox, the marks left by the tips of the permanently extended claws are visible; but no trace of claws can be detected in the spoor of the cat, unless the animal has used those of the hind-feet for gripping the ground in jumping, because the claws are retractile, and never project beyond the hair of the foot in ordinary progression.

Although the badger and the otter could be easily identified by the characters mentioned above, and also by the circumstance

Fore-foot. COMMON BADGER. Hind-foot.



Fore-foot. WILD CAT. Hind-foot.

that there is no other British carnivore comparable to them in size with similarly-constructed feet, the determination of the spoor of the fox and wild cat would be less sure, because of the existence in England of digitigrade carnivores like them in the size and structure of the feet. It would be by no means a simple task, for instance, to tell the spoor of a fox from that of a dog of about the same size, like a fox-terrier; nor, without special knowledge, would it be easy to distinguish the spoor of a wild cat from that of a domestic tabby. In the latter case size would be the only criterion, the feet of the domestic cat being, on the average, the smaller of the two. Size of spoor, however, since it varies with the age of the animal and with the nature of the soil trodden upon, is by no means always a safe test, and a wrong interpretation might in this instance be easily reached. In the case of the dog and fox, if the imprint were good, the thick coating of hairs which grows between the pads of the fox, but is scarcely developed in the dog, might betray to which of the two animals the tracks belonged.

LION.
Fore-foot. From a Drawing by Capt. Stigand.
From "Central African Game and Its Spoor" (Horace Cox).

These simple examples show, in a concrete form, the kind of facts with which the tracker has to be acquainted, and some of the difficulties he has to surmount. They also show that a knowledge of the fauna of the district he lives in is absolutely essential. This consideration introduces another aspect of the subject. Under natural conditions it very seldom happens that two closely-allied species, nearly resembling one another in the size of their tracks, occur in the same locality. In tropical Africa, for instance, only two species of large predatory cat-like carnivora—namely, the lion and the leopard—are found, and the leopard's tracks are so much smaller that no confusion between the two is likely to arise. The same holds good of the tiger and leopard in India. But if the lion and the tiger lived side by side in the same area it would be by no means easy to tell their spoors apart. But even if two allied species inhabit the same continent, one will usually be found in one part of it and the second in another. Of the two species of eland, for example, inhabiting Africa, one occurs in the eastern and southern and the other in the western parts of the continent; and since the spoor of these antelopes can be distinguished by its size from that of all others, no one acquainted with their distribution will be puzzled to identify the exact species of eland by its line of footmarks. Again, even in cases where two somewhat similar species frequent the same district, a shrewd guess as to the nature of the spoor can often be made from the kind of country it is observed in. In tropical Africa, for instance, there are two common species of wild swine, the wart-hog and the bush-pig, and these animals, according to Captain Stigand, who has paid particular attention to the tracking of Central African game, have very similar spoor; but the bush-pig is commonly found in the hills, whereas the wart-hog usually keeps to lower-lying country.

The feet of animals, moreover, are almost invariably adapted to the nature of the ground they habitually traverse. Mountain antelopes, goats, and sheep have short, compact hoofs, suitable for hard, unyielding ground. Marsh antelopes, conversely, have long hoofs which splay

WILD BOAR.
Hind-foot, deeply sunk so as to show the impression of the two false hoofs behind.

widely at the tips. The tracks of the mountain species are never seen in swamps, nor those of the swamp species amongst the mountains. These and many another elementary fact in animal lore, when once learnt, considerably simplify the interpretation of spoor.

CHITAL, OR SPOTTED DEER OF INDIA.
Fore-foot, with the hoofs in contact and spread.

It must not be supposed that the spoor of individuals of the same species is always the same, nor that a particular individual will leave the same track wherever he passes. The hoofs may be shorter than usual from wear on hard ground, or longer than usual from want of wear on soft ground; and such differences, when appearing in the spoor, may baffle the inexperienced tracker. Equally puzzling at first may he find the difference in the spread of the hoofs according to the speed at which the animal is travelling, the tips being more widely splayed and imprinting the ground more deeply with the impact of the running than of the walking gait. But, broadly speaking, each species has its distinctive spoor, which can be recognized by size and peculiarities of shape, irrespective of speed and other factors conducive to its variation, when the interpretation is backed by an acquaintance with the geographical range of the species and with their habitat in a particular district.

One of the factors above alluded to as conducive to variation in spoor is age. The tracks of young animals often differ from those of adults in other features than size, and not uncommonly resemble the spoor of another and smaller species. But animals sufficiently young to leave spoor puzzling in that respect are nearly always found in company with adults of the same species; and recollection of this fact is a useful aid in learning to distinguish their footmarks.

DUIKERBOK, A SMALL AFRICAN ANTELOPE.

Apart from the determination of species, there are many things connected with spooring it is necessary to know before this pursuit can be profitably followed. One of the most important is the age of footmarks—the time, that is to say, that has elapsed since they were made. If water still oozes into the imprints in wet soil, it may be safely inferred that the animal has not long since passed that way. If, on the other hand, the mud is obviously baked and dry, it will be equally certain that the spoor is not recent; but its approximate age can then only be roughly guessed from local conditions, such as, for example, the amount of sunshine to which the place has been exposed.

Another important thing for the tracker to know which spoor can tell him is the speed at which the animal is travelling, so that he may calculate his chance of getting within range in the time at his disposal. Speed can be judged by the difference in the stride between the walking, trotting, and running action, and by the relative positions of the spoor of the front and hind feet, and the spoor of the front-foot can usually be distinguished from that of the hind-foot by its greater width. Sometimes, indeed, as in the case of the tapir and capybara, there is a difference in the number of toes, four being present on the fore-foot and three on the hind. Many antelopes, like the springbok, when going at speed, traverse the ground with a series of bounds, the two fore-feet and the two hind-feet being kept close together in pairs; and drawings of horses and other animals going at full speed suggest somewhat similar placing of the feet. The camera at once shows that this is an error. In reality very few mammals move in that way, and the action of a horse may be taken as a fairly typical illustration of the average action of other cursorial quadrupeds, at all events of the larger kinds. The word "stride," it must be explained, is used in the following descriptions for the distance between the successive imprints of the same foot, back or front, of either side; and the word "step" is applied to the distance between the imprints either of the two fore-feet or of the two hind-feet; and where the legs

are approximately equal in length, the back and front steps are also approximately equal, whether the movement be a walk, trot, or gallop.

When a horse is moving at a slow walk the hind-hoof of either side is planted behind the corresponding fore-hoof; but as the speed increases the two impressions come closer together, until they coincide, and, in rapid walking, pass one another, the hind-hoof coming down in front of the imprint of the fore-hoof of the same side, but well behind that of the fore-hoof of the opposite side, the succession of imprints, leading off with the left-fore hoof, being left-fore, left-hind, right-fore, right-hind. The order of planting the hoofs at a trot is the same as at a rapid walk, but the steps and strides are of course longer. In the case of a two-year colt, Mr. Gamgee found that at a quick walk the imprint of the left-fore was almost a foot behind that of the left-hind hoof. About twice that distance separated the imprints of the left-hind and right-fore, and a little over one foot lay between the latter and the right-hind. The step was about three feet, and the stride close upon five and a half feet. At a trot the above-mentioned distances were one foot seven inches, three feet six inches, and one foot nine inches, the step and the stride just surpassing five feet and ten feet respectively. At a gallop the order of placing the hoofs was altered, both hind-hoofs coming down in advance of the fore-hoofs, the order of succession, leading off as before, being left-fore, right-fore, left-hind, right-hind. The distances between the four impressions were almost exactly equal—namely, a little over four feet six inches; the step just exceeded nine feet, and the entire stride was a little over eighteen feet.

COMMON AMERICAN TAPIR.

Hind-foot, showing the impress of the three toes.

Fore-foot, showing the impress of the four toes.

This description of the spoor of a horse walking, trotting, and galloping will show how the speed of typical quadrupeds may be estimated by the distances between the imprints of the four feet.

So far I have only discussed the question of spooring where tracks are distinctly impressed in wet soil, which shows every detail of the structure of the foot; and enough has been said on that head to indicate some of the difficulties of spooring even under those favourable conditions. Where those conditions do not prevail the difficulties of the task are multiplied tenfold. It need hardly be pointed out that there is an exact correspondence between the hardness of the soil traversed by game and the labour experienced in following the spoor. Over certain kinds of ground all visible trail is lost, and tracking by means of footmarks becomes an impossibility. This is one of the drawbacks of tracking by eyesight; and it is here that the superiority of following game by scent, as practised by animals other than man, manifests itself. But even smell will not hold on all soil, as the frequency with which hounds are at fault attests.

Where, owing to the nature of the ground, foot-tracks are faint and difficult to interpret, help to make good this defect may often be found in one or more of the many indications of its passage that an animal leaves behind. Sharp eyes should be kept on the ground for signs of overturned stones or down-pressed blades of grass; and, since herbivorous game commonly feeds on the move, unless under the stimulus of fear, careful watch must be kept on the surrounding vegetation to note where bark has been peeled or where foliage and branches have been nibbled. The degree of freshness in the break in a twig, or the bite in a leaf, tells roughly the time that has elapsed since the quarry passed; and the height at which the foliage has been plucked will suggest the size of the animal and give a clue to its specific identity. But of all such adventitious aids to spooring none is so helpful as the nature of the droppings. Specific identity can indeed be determined in some cases from these alone, their size, consistency, and shape telling the necessary tale. In all members, for example, of the bovine group, which comprises buffaloes, bison, gaur, and others, the droppings are like those of domestic cattle; whereas in all the antelopes, giraffe, and deer they are pellet-shaped, and resemble in a general way those of sheep and goats. The usefulness of this information is obvious. In

the case of elands and buffaloes, both large, heavily-built beasts with somewhat similar spoor, the difference in the droppings, as Mr. Selous has remarked, may be the surest means of distinguishing the trail of the one from that of the other.

Again, since neither deer, sheep, nor goats exist as wild animals in tropical Africa, the presence of pellet-shaped droppings is a tolerably sure sign of the proximity of antelopes. Conversely, since there are no true antelopes in America, similar droppings suggest that deer are at hand; and where footmarks become difficult to decipher on the stony mountain-sides of Europe and Asia, detection of such droppings may hold out hopes of the chance of a shot at ibex, wild sheep, or goat-antelopes.

That confusion may possibly arise between the pellet-shaped droppings of small antelopes and of some of the larger rodents will be readily understood by those who have noticed the resemblance between the droppings of sheep and of rabbits. But the faintest sign of a footmark near by will give the necessary clue to the identity of the animal, since none of the rodents are cloven-hoofed like the antelopes, but usually show clearly the impress of at least four digits; although more rarely, as in the case of rabbits and hares, the dense matting of long hair that clothes the soles of the feet obscures all toe and pad marks, and suggests the pressure of a brush upon the soil.

ANOA, OR DWARF BUFFALO OF CELEBES.

Fore-foot, showing the rounded impression characteristic of the cattle tribe.

Spooring has a fascination all its own, and is, perhaps, better fitted than most country pastimes for arousing interest and at the same time inculcating accuracy of observation and sound judgment in the young; and special attention has been drawn in the foregoing pages to the footmarks of some of our British animals to show the opportunities there are for studying the subject in our own country.

BEAVER-RAT, OR COYPU.

Left hind-foot, to show the webbing characteristic of some amphibious mammals.

COMMON HARE.

Fore-foot. Hind-foot.

BHARAL, OR BLUE SHEEP OF THE HIMALAYAS.

Fore-foot. Hind-foot.

COMMON MARTEN.

Hind-foot. Fore-foot.

Most of the illustrations in this article were taken from plaster-casts of the feet of animals that lived in the Zoological Society's Gardens.

The photographs of the casts reproduced above suffer from the curious optical illusion which always occurs in such cases. At first sight the footprints appear to stand out in relief instead of being depressed, and it is necessary to look at them steadily for a few moments in order to obtain the proper effect.

THE SPLENDID LOVER.

By MORLEY ROBERTS.

Illustrated by W. R. S. Stott.

LONGFELLOW wrote a poem, so I am told, about a song which was found in the heart of a friend. There is no telling what may happen in the pursuit of literature, even the humblest. For instance, I myself, a sober man of letters devoted to the critical side, once relaxed and wrote a sentimental story, which was not wholly without success, about a girl who courted a pleasing stranger over the telephone. It had other results than gratifying letters to my editor and myself. For Billy Braithwaite imitated me. I do not mean that he copied the story and sold it again, as some people do, for he never wrote a line in his life if he could help it. He was a simple-hearted, kindly, splendid young fellow, who played cricket for his county, and thought life was invented for the purpose of playing games. So it was only by chance that he read my little story, and, having done so, he plunged headlong into difficulties. Thus I found, so to speak, my song in the heart of a friend, and he came round to my house for medical advice.

"Well, what do you want, young man?" I asked, ungraciously.

"Are you working?" he inquired, rather bashfully.

I was satirical. "No; between ten and one I play with ink and paper. It's a game like another. Why don't you write?"

He blushed and exploded. "I wish you didn't," he said, surprisingly.

I stared.

"Yes, you've got me into trouble," said the handsome boy, looking as pink as red hawthorn in May.

"Sit down. Explain," I said, severely.

"That telephone story of yours——"

"Am I never to hear the last of it? I loathe it——"

"It's very good, much better than your criticisms," said Billy.

"Oh, talk about full-pitches and yorkers and long hops," I retorted, contemptuously.

"Well, I wish I'd never seen your beastly story," he moaned.

"Explain, or out you go," said I.

"It's about a girl," he stammered.

I made a brilliant shot. "You've been telephoning to a girl!"

"Yes," said my pink hero, sulkily.

"And you didn't know her?"

"I've never spoken to her, but I thought it would be a good way and easier——"

"The result, Billy, the result?"

"She was very rude to me. But I don't care. I'm going to marry her! She's beautiful. Only—only making love that way is harder than it seemed when I read your beastly story."

"Ungrateful dog," I said. "What did you say to the poor thing?"

"Oh, I said that I loved her. I kept on saying it," blushed Billy.

"Crude," said I, "horribly crude. And she?"

"She said she'd tell her father, and rang me off!"

"The deuce! And what then?"

"I rang her up the next day, and said I was desperate and that I loved her again."

I shook my head. "Love-making isn't like slamming a full-pitch to leg, old boy. It's a game which requires skill, delicacy, tact, eloquence, feeling, and some sense of the right use of words, gained either by the unearned increment of the passionate mind or by practice. Have you ever made love before?"

"Not over the 'phone," said Billy. "I usually kiss them first; but over the 'phone——"

"Ah, there you are reduced to the unassisted art of words, my son. And how did you try to excite her curiosity?"

"I—I asked her if she'd like tickets for Lord's to-morrow, when I'm playin' against Yorkshire. I thought that would do it——"

"And did it?"

"She said she hated cricket. But I can't believe it."

"When did this conversation take place?" I asked.

"Last night," said Billy; "and she rang me off when I said I'd ring her up again to-night at nine."

I looked at my watch. It was a quarter to nine.

"I see," said I. "You want to ring her up from here, and get the advantage of my advice and help?"

"Well, you got me into it," grumbled Billy: "so you might give a fellow some advice."

"You want me to play the part of Cyrano de Bergerac?" I said.

"Never heard of the beggar," replied Billy.

"Then how can you make modern love?" I demanded. "Have you read Meredith?"

"Which Meredith?"

"You make me ill. There's only one."

"Rot! I know two myself," said Billy.

I scorned to enlighten him.

"*The* Meredith is a splendid lover. Into words he puts moonlight and the sound of the wind piping faintly in scented woods. That's the kind of divine art you need, Billy."

"Oh, I say, I'll ring her up and you shall talk to her and show me how it's done. Your voice is rather like mine—both deep, you know."

Billy Braithwaite's proposition almost made my remaining hairs as curly as his own. And yet it was fascinating.

"Well, I'm hanged!" I said.

"Oh, do!" implored Billy.

"If I court her she'll love me," I said. "And I warn you I'll take advantage of it. Besides, if you must marry, I know a much nicer girl."

"Rot!" said Billy. "You can't take advantage. You're married."

The poor lad's innocence was quite beautiful.

"Besides, when she saw you——" he went on.

"What then, Billy?"

"She'd see you were fifty."

"Bah! Fifty is the deadly dangerous age. Then one combines maturity with trained fascination."

And nine o'clock struck.

"All right," said I. "Ring up the Carissima."

"I mustn't let you know her number," said Billy. "That wouldn't be fair."

I smiled sadly, and went into the next room to my wife.

"If you come into the library presently, you'll hear me making desperate love over the telephone," I told her.

"Who is it this time?" she asked, calmly.

I knew she would ask that: any woman would. But no woman, however clever and calm, would have expected the answer I gave.

"I don't know," I said, lightly.

Yet she didn't turn a hair.

"You don't know?"

"Only that she is supposed to be of a rare and remarkable loveliness," I said.

"And her name?"

"I've never heard it," I replied, with careless ease.

"Awfully interesting," said my wife. "But I thought Billy was in with you. Is this a joint affair?"

"Yes," said I. "I suppose it might be called such."

Going back to my room, I found Billy, seated at the table with a receiver to his ear, shaking like an aspen.

"Yes, my dearest," said Billy, in a trembling voice; "I said I would. I love the ground you walk on."

"You flat-footed, flat-headed nincompoop; you dust-dried purveyor of platitudinary poppycock, let me get hold!" I said, in a bitter whisper. He slid out wildly, and I sat down and grasped the receiver just in time to hear a clear, clean voice say "Rats!" I couldn't help thinking that the voice was rather like that of a great pal of mine. But, of course, it couldn't be Kitty Clare's!

Now, "Rats" made a hard opening, and some would have been appalled at its difficulties. But I am ready-witted.

"Blue-eyed divinity of the sacred wire, your zoological retort would be discouraging to anyone else. But I am a splendid lover."

Did I omit to say that Billy told me she was blue-eyed? By the way, Kitty was blue-eyed too.

"Are you?" said the stranger's voice. "I'm glad to hear it. Begin to be splendid, or I shall ring you off."

"You are surprised, belovèd. Deny it if you can," said I.

"Nothing surprises me in a fool," she said, sharply.

"I played on you, my divinity," I retorted. "I wanted to try if your mind resembled its dear material casket. Now I know you are swift, brilliant, sparkling. Yesterday I used all the commonplaces of the common lover. I collected them from some popular love-stories and wrote them down. I said you were my own sweet darling; that I should never love again; that I worshipped the ground you trod on, and that I kissed the hem of your harem-skirt, or stuff like that. I told you I couldn't sleep or eat; that life had lost its salt and savour, that cricket was feeble, golf silly, and racquets rot. Now didn't I, angel of the seraphic wire?"

"You said something like it," she replied, gurgling. "Have you taken a tonic?" She fairly bubbled with laughter, but Billy hadn't a smile in him.

"I stood beneath your casement, child, in the divine dim dawn," said I, "and such inspiration has the power of sacred wine. I said to myself that her country should be my country, her people my people, and—and—"

"And what?"

"Her window my window," said I, whereat Billy flushed and jumped and looked furious. "So if you say 'Rats' again I shall be much grieved with you."

After a little pause she said:—

"You—you seem different."

"It is because I *am* different," I replied. "I have changed splendidly; I hardly know myself, *chiquita*. That is Spanish; it's a divine language to make majestic love in. So is Italian, especially in a garden. But English is good enough, if used by a master."

"That sounds conceited."

"I *am* conceited, vain, and magnificent," I said, "for are you not on the perilous verge——"

"Of what?"

"Of loving me?"

"I'm not," she snapped; "oh, not at all."

"I know, divinity! Intuition fills my heart. You are bending to me out of wonderful curiosity, and that is nearer to love than pity. No; you shall never pity me. I'm brave, even to endure your loss. True, I might die of it, but what's death if love rings one off? I will hang up my receiver with dignity and be connected with a vaster exchange in the great international company of lovers."

I believe she liked that.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"It's a secret," I told her; "but some day you shall know. I'll give it you freely. But if I told you now you might set your fat, ferocious father on me."

She was absolutely musical with pleasing laughter.

"He's a duck, and isn't fat and ferocious."

"All fathers are essentially fat and ferocious, child," I replied; "the very essence of fatherhood is fatness and ferocity. Let us avoid the subject carefully. Oh, my starry flower of love's elysium, let me gather you!"

"You must be mad," she said.

"Without a doubt love is insanity," I told her; "but so are all things worth having or saying or doing. Do you read Meredith, sweetheart?"

"Do you—you?" she asked, apparently surprised that I knew his wonderful abiding name. When I looked at Billy I was not surprised.

I quoted, with serene scorn of her question:—

"'Away with systems! Away with a corrupt world! Let us breathe the air of the Enchanted Islands!'"

"Where's that from, wise fool?"

I seemed to hear her quickened breathing, to note a passionate delight in words. Kitty Clare, whose voice was like hers, had that great delight. I imagined my new dear with her lips parted; with her blue eyes shining. Oh, she was sweet! Already I nearly loved her and scorned the unable cricketer who glowered at me. I answered my magic maiden:—

"From the chapter called 'A Diversion Played on a Penny Whistle,' dear musician on the black and white keys of my responsive soul. I know it by heart. Shall I repeat some of its glorious counterpoint, its fugal interlaced melodies?"

She breathed a faint wondering "Yes."

"'He calls her by her name, Lucy, and she, blushing at her great boldness, calls him by his, Richard. These two names are the keynotes of the wonderful harmonies the angels sing aloft.

"'"Lucy, my beloved!"

"'"Oh, Richard!"

"'Out in the world there, on the skirts of the woodland, a shepherd pipes to meditative Eve on a penny whistle.

"'Love's musical instrument is as old and as poor; it has but two stops and yet you see the cunning musician does thus much with it.'"

Then she breathed—to me her lover:—

"I—I remember. Oh, it was sweet!"

"Sweet as summer, child; but, oh, the sorrow that came!"

Poor Billy, like some extruded satyr, cast out of Paradise by a mightier Pan, sat with a broken pipe, mourning and revengeful.

I changed my serious pipe and went back lightly to lighter words. And yet all these words would be as nothing to some Richard's 'Lucy, my beloved!' for to that earth and Heaven itself chant great accompaniment.

"You've read 'Cyrano de Bergerac'?" I asked.

"I will," she said. "Oh, it's fine, isn't it? I—I love books. But yesterday you were a sportsman and only that——"

"That's my enchanting way," I answered, laughing. "Be consistent in your inconsistency and there's no staleness in life. All things are games. By the way, while we are on the subject of games, a subject naturally dear to the perfectly-constituted English heart, may I venture to inquire whether you like them or play them, and have any views on the methods of scoring for the Cricket Championship? I, and a young friend of mine, that you may some day meet, after our marriage, feel much interested in this."

"I loathe most of them," she said. I told Billy her reply, and he collapsed like a second-class eleven on a sticky wicket and sat in a heap in the wet pavilion of his sorrowful mind.

"Nonsense," said I. "To be one up and two to play on a fast wicket at Ranelagh, with a goal in sight, gives me immense joy. And a cut to point at the first tee, narrowly but cleverly avoiding being caught by the caddie at short leg, makes me sing."

"It's all jargon," she said. And I couldn't tell whether she meant the language of games or my neat disarrangement of it. But Billy raged and shook his big fist at me. I smiled at him and continued to score all round the wicket.

"Squash racquets are poetic," I said. "I once scored seventy-seven not out. Real tennis is divine, and at its cannon game I'm as good as most. I convert fast yorkers into full-pitches and deposit them in the grille every time."

She laughed a little, and I had some suspicion that she was not so innocent as she seemed. But Billy suddenly exploded.

"Don't brag," she said, with a beautiful laugh. "I begin to know you."

"Would that you did! You shall some day. But let games go. Life is what I want, and lots of it, not eidola, not mere simulacra. I can give up games, dear Roxane."

"Who was she?"

"She that Cyrano loved and courted for another, alas! as she stood on a balcony in the night, in a moony night of summer, among jasmine and roses. He used winged words that were jewels, words that were honey-bees that hummed and yet stung. Oh, he wrought words into mad mosaics of passion, dear child. Would that I had his gifts!"

"Indeed, good sir, you talk rather finely, and need no charity," she retorted.

"Never till this night, never, I assure you. But when, when and how and where shall we meet, dearest one?"

"Nowhere and nowhen, most probably," she said; "for, if I ever do see you, you'll not talk like this, I'm sure."

"Perhaps not, little one. You must read the script in my eyes. If I saw you now I might have no dear words to offer you."

"Thanks," she said; "but I'm going to cut you off. I must go out."

"Don't," said I; "let this night, where all the immensities for once rush together, be sacred to dear meditation."

By this time I was frightfully in love with her. I almost forgot Kitty Clare. It was natural and excusable, and I loathed Billy as much as he hated me. I could see that in his eyes as I turned my poetic soul loose once more and trembled with emotion. I have rather a nice voice, though I can't sing, and I played on it with her, as if it was a harp of many strings. I made dear little speeches to her, which were like broken branches of blossom jewelled with dew and tears. They were really like that, or I thought so at the time. I told Billy so afterwards, and he barely restrained himself from stepping out, converting me into a full-pitch, and slamming me through the wall.

"Well, I must ring off," she said at last, I thought rather reluctantly.

"One more dear moment. You do not hate me now?" I asked.

"No," she replied, coolly; "I think you're quite funny."

"Humorous, dear, humorous," I urged. "Your choice of words, especially in interjections, such as 'Rats!' is far from perfect."

"I TOLD BILLY HER REPLY, AND HE COLLAPSED."

"Good night, word-choosing sir."

"Still another moment! I shall ring you up to-morrow."

"Will you?"

Then silence fell upon me. The magic wire ceased to respond to the delicate ardour of my new-born passion and the modesty of the awakened maiden. I turned to Billy triumphantly.

"There!" said I.

"You've mucked it," he cried, savagely; "you talked rot!"

I looked down on him.

"Boy, rash youth, dashing youth, you are ignorant of life. Let me tell you there are many orders of rot. The rot I talked was beautiful, charming rot, inspiring and intriguing rot, exciting and curiosity-creating rot. Now, your own particular brand of putridity is flat-footed, jejune, piffling, and incompetent. In love you are an addle-head, obtuse, doltish, undivine, Bœotian, beetle-witted."

"But—but am I to talk like that?" he asked.

"Don't attempt it. To-morrow be plain, direct, simple, respectful. Women like change. Being always more or less the same themselves, they love the varied, the variegated. Be mightily various."

"I—I see," said the unvarious Billy, doubtfully.

And at that moment there was a knock at the hall-door. I knew my dear little friend Kitty Clare was coming in that night, and I thought I recognized her characteristic rat-tat. I rather loved her. It was well known in the house that I did. I turned to Billy.

"There's a heavenly knock," I said; "it's angelic."

"I—I don't want to see anyone," cried Billy.

"She's divine, and will destroy this telephone girl utterly."

"Bosh! You've not seen her."

"I've seen my pet, my—my cosset, my fondling, my little divinity; and if she falls in love with you there will be murder done."

"Oh, keep her," sighed Billy; "there's only one in the world."

"True," said I. "But Kitty is in the next room talking to my wife, who also loves her. I'll be back presently."

And, sobering down, I went into the next room and found Kitty seated on the arm of my wife's chair, looking as brilliant and as soft as diamonds and moonstones mingled. She was lighted up with youthful joy, and her eyes were like stars. I took her by her nice pink ear, and pressed it after the manner of Napoleon. She looked at me rather strangely, I thought.

"Oh, Ned, you can't think——" she began. "I have been having an adventure!"

"Don't; they are dangerous."

"This is fun."

"There's a man in it?"

"How could it be fun if there wasn't?"

I shook my head.

"He's very clever, and oh, so stupid, Ned!"

"It's a victim! Another?"

She nodded.

"But I've never seen him!"

I ought to have guessed the fatal truth with the rapidity of a photographic shutter set to the ten-thousandth part of a second.

"Never seen him?"

Between my question and her answer I *knew!*

"I've only heard him."

And I had heard her! It was her voice that I had heard upon the 'phone, the only time I had ever done so. Fool that I was, I had been courting her for another! But did she know me? These women are so strange, so dull, so bright, so foolish, so brilliant. I wondered if my wife guessed. I looked at her and thought she did not. Oh, these women! When you want them to be stupid they are of an uncanny and magical intelligence, and when you ask for real insight they are as foolish as moths, as stubborn as pigs, and as senseless as decerebrate hens.

"By Jove!" I ejaculated, feebly.

"He made love to me over the telephone," said Kitty.

My wife glanced up at me with a look which contained pity and insults and consolation and triumph and sorrow. She knew I adored Kitty, and knew that I had been talking with her. In fact, she knew everything, and I should never know whether she only guessed it then. I sat down where there was the least light, and Kitty, after a curious little pause, told us her story. But her voice had no great triumph in it. She was sorry for me, as she said that her unknown lover had told her all about his height and fighting weight to begin with. He was, she averred, of a stupidity which appalled her, and a simplicity which made her want to comfort him. And then, this very night, he had rung her up and been quite wonderful.

"Quite wonderful," said my wife, softly. She *is* a dear.

"He was like two men," said Kitty. "He talked of cricket and Cyrano de Bergerac. And, Ned, what are squash racquets?"

Bitter as I felt, I restrained myself, and told her that they were a kind of racquet served squashed, and she looked at me oddly.

"And then he made quite wonderful love," she said, softly; "though he was humorous, too."

"Curse him!" said I. "Do you love the fool or the genius?"

"As if I could love a mixed man on the telephone!" she said. "He might be ugly——"

"Ugliness doesn't matter," I said, sternly.

"Yes, it does," said my wife; "only it can be got over—gradually."

These women! Can anyone be blamed for flying to Mount Athos, where a perpetual service is held for men only?

"Enough of this," I said, rising. "Have you ever met my young friend Billy Braithwaite, Kitty?"

him, Kitty. Ned has been drinking words out of a bottle, and Billy, the dear, hasn't two words to his back."

"Let's get it over. Come and see Billy," I said, sternly.

"We'll come in a moment," said my wife. So I went back to Billy.

"They are coming in to see us," I told him.

"I WENT INTO THE NEXT ROOM AND FOUND KITTY SEATED ON THE ARM OF MY WIFE'S CHAIR."

"Is he clever?" asked Kitty.

"No; clever men are not allowed in this house after eight o'clock at night," I replied. "They excite me, and then I can't sleep. No; Billy is big and beautiful. But he loves a lady; a divine creature, so he sings."

"Boh!" said my wife. "Don't listen to

He showed alarm, but before he could speak the door opened and my wife came in first. Kitty came behind her like a star drawn by the moon.

"This is our friend Mr. Braithwaite," said my wife. For very shame and sorrow and rage I could not look at Billy for a minute. I

turned my face from him, and yet heard him gasp. Undoubtedly this was She, the Lily Maid of Hampstead's Astolat, the Rose of Sharon just across the way! I turned and saw the worst entrance any man ever made upon the stage of love. His mouth stood open and nothing issued forth. He was like a duck in thunder, as dazed as if I had clubbed him with a warri or given him poison. And yet how handsome the poor boy was! His strength and manly beauty made me vicious.

"Be clever, Billy," I said, with apparent callousness.

"Oh!" said Billy. But when Kitty looked at him I knew that sometimes a mere bald interjection might outsoar eloquence and beat the gallantest array of words. She blushed divinely, and, in a rage, I hastened to do my worst.

"Miss Clare has just been telling us of an adventure," said I.

"So—strange a one," said my wife.

"Some unspeakable ruffian, some low-grade caitiff, some rake-hell and reprobate has dared to make love to her over the telephone," I said, indignantly.

And Billy wore rage and scarlet on his face till he went white as a shorn tup.

"I—I really believe he was in earnest, though," said Kitty, blushing.

"Who would not be?" I asked, bitterly. "But the creature, the pup, the scallawag

"I TURNED AND SAW THE WORST ENTRANCE ANY MAN EVER MADE UPON THE STAGE OF LOVE."

who would dare, without a due and formal introduction in proper form, to say what he said ought to be tied up and beaten with nettles."

"Oh!" said Billy, with clenched hands. But I had him in a clinch, to phrase it so. He glared at me and goggled at her in great amazement.

"Tell us again about the low-down creature," I commanded.

She did, every now and again casting shy, pleased glances at the dazed, tremendous Billy.

"Oh, the beginning was stupid," said Kitty, "but it was funny, too. He said he loved the ground I walked on, and kept on saying it."

"No doubt he thought it original," I growled.

"And he talked about cricket as if it was all the world but me," said Kitty; "and also about racquets, squash ones. What are squash ones, Mr. Braithwaite?"

He said "Oh!" and came out with a confused account of the game which I could see she didn't understand. But she was beautifully patient.

"And then to-night," she went on, "he was just lovely."

"Just lovely," I said, with a subtle air of triumph.

"Divine," said Kitty; "quite celestial. He was witty, sad, humorous, chaffing, pleading, and joyous."

I had taught her to use words and had commended to her notice the force of cumulative adjectives. Of course, she had not my grasp of style.

"And I want to borrow Rostand's 'Cyrano de Bergerac,'" she said, "and Meredith's book with something in it about a penny whistle, which is very beautiful."

"You shall have them," I replied; "and if I can't find my copies Mr. Braithwaite will lend you his."

I expected Billy to sprawl in the sawdust at this sudden jolt. But I own he surprised me.

"Of course I will," he said, "with—with pleasure."

He looked at me triumphantly, and I can't bear to be looked at like that by younger men.

"Yes, do," said I. "Yours will be new copies, fresh, fair, and uncut."

And then my wife was called out of the room to attend to something in the shape of a hat. And I, being a savage judge of hats, followed to see she did nothing foolish. As I went Billy showed great signs of terror and joy.

When I had decided which was the right hat and had been snubbed, my wife said:—

"I think we must tell Kitty everything."

By her use of the word "everything," I knew she knew something.

"Not before Billy," I replied; and she looked at me. Very few nice married men don't know that look.

On going back into my working-room we found Kitty and Billy chattering like two birds on a bough when the roaring sun gets up in June. He was showing her round my bookshelves and she was looking up at him with pellucid and innocent eyes, as if she didn't know the inside of most of them better than he did the outside. She carried them away in armfuls, and I had to cart them back every month in a cab.

"Showing her my books, eh?" I said, sardonically; and Billy went as pink as pickled salmon. The confounded boy looked amazingly handsome.

"Mr. Braithwaite *loves* books," said Kitty, almost severely.

"Yes, they're—they're rippin'," said Billy. And presently he whispered in my ear:—

"I'm a bounder; I'm deceiving her already, about books and the 'phone, you know."

"Haven't you done enough? Don't you think it wise to go? She might find you out, Billy. Try her on the 'phone to-morrow."

"Can't I come here?"

"To use me—me?" I said, bitterly. "Oh, yes, come."

Kitty was very nice to him as I edged him out of the door and got rid of him.

"Nice chap, Billy," I said, as I went back to the others.

"I thought him rather joyous," said Kitty, boldly, using one of my pet particular words, as she often did.

"A splendid young cricketing animal with the brains of a baron of beef," said I.

"Don't mind him, Kitty," said my wife.

"The threatened marriage of any pretty girl causes me acute anguish," I said, brutally.

"Oh!" said Kitty. I knew "any" would madden her.

"Well, it lies between Billy and the 'phone man," I said, with a sigh. "I wish I'd never written my wretched story about love-making on that instrument. It has done frightful mischief already."

After that Kitty said she must go home.

"I dare say that—that blighter will ring you up again," I said, casually.

She looked at me oddly.

"What must I say if he does?"

"Say you've seen someone you love better," I said, gloomily.

"You're both dears," said Kitty.

"What are we to do about this?" asked my wife when Kitty had gone.

"What you like," I retorted. "She'll marry him. It's horrid, but inevitable, since you seem to have such a rooted objection to polygamy."

"You must tell her the truth," said my wife.

"Must I?"

"At once."

I went to my room and rang up Kitty instantly.

"Are you Miss Clare?" I asked.

"Yes! Who are you?"

"Dear me, I don't quite know! But I'm one of those who love you," I said.

I heard her make a little sound of vexation and amusement. I wondered how much she knew.

"I—I don't know you?" she asked.

"You never will, dear one. But be sure I love you."

She answered strangely. "I—believe you do, now."

That was sweet to hear; but I acted bravely.

"But I can't marry you! At least, part of me can't. I'm partly married, you see."

I was married and Billy wasn't; so, as the 'phone man was Billy and I, what I said was true.

"Friend, you are mad," she said.

"A little mad, no doubt," I replied. "I hate the part of me that isn't married."

I wished I'd never tried to help Billy. I wished I had the courage to clear up the doubts in my mind as to whether she really knew who was speaking to her.

"You are a fantastic creature," she said, after a pause.

"Aye, a phantasm of the living, a disembodied ghost who loves you dearly. Good night, dearest."

I rang her off before I said anything silly, and sat down to have a smoke and read Rabelais. And half an hour later Kitty rang me up—me, in my proper person.

"Is that you?" said Kitty.

"Yes, my Muscovy duck, my tender canvas-back from an enchanted Chesapeake, it's I. What is it now?"

"He rang me up again — twice," she said.

So I knew Billy hadn't been able to keep away from the 'phone.

"What, twice?"

"Twice," she said. "The first time I rather loved him, though the poor, sad dear said he was happily married, you know. And the second time he was silly again, so I said, 'How dare you ring me up when you own you are married?' And he spluttered angrily. So just to annoy him I said I was married too, a secret marriage, and rang him off."

"I wonder if the poor fellow will believe it?" I said.

"Let him," replied Kitty, with apparent callousness.

I wished I knew how much she knew, for it was like fencing by lightning to speak with her now.

I knew Billy had impressed her, just as he had impressed me before I hated him so for interfering in sacred things, like a blundering half-god without knowledge of ritual. But I knew he must be having a bad time, if she had told him that she was married secretly.

"By the way, Billy Braithwaite is playing at Lord's to-morrow for our county against Yorkshire," I said, grumpily.

"Yes, he told me," she yawned. "Good night, you strange romantic dear."

And with that she cut me off, still wondering. I went back to Rabelais and a pipe. And then, just as I was getting to the Island of Lanterns, Billy rang me up.

"Who is it?" I demanded, savagely.

He fairly wailed over the wire.

"Old chap, she's married secretly," he moaned.

"I'm not surprised," I said. "Only accidents over which I had no control——"

"Oh, and some blighter has told her I'm married!" yelled Billy. "If I find out who he is I'll murder him."

"Violence is a confession of weakness, and it only does harm to a good cause. You aren't married, are you?"

"Oh, I say, you make me wild," he roared. "What am I to do?"

"What can you do if she's married? Look here, I want to go to bed. You'd better do the same if you don't want Hirst to bowl you first ball to-morrow."

"I—I don't care for cricket any more," said Billy.

"Good night," I answered, and cut him off brutally.

On telling my wife how matters stood she was a little ruffled, and said I was the victim of my own invention and that my imagination got the better of my morals. This was so acutely true that I resented it.

"Well, I believe she knows, any way," said my wife.

I am not afflicted with the general mania for chasing balls or seeing balls chased, or for smiting them according to elaborate artificial rules, but I went to Lord's next morning because I almost hated Billy and hoped Hirst would roll her out flat and make a mere cricket-pitch of her promising intellect. It was pitiful, and I did hope that Hirst would be strong and bowl a full-pitched googling yorker with swerve to it and knock out what cricketers would call Billy's brains. And I used to love the lad, too.

The very first person I saw to take any notice of was Kitty! I went quite hot with rage, and could have spanked her. She was with her father, though what he did at Lord's beat me, as there wasn't any blue china or an

"POOR BILLY WAS OUT TO THE NEXT BALL, HAVING SCORED NOTHING."

would kill him. A very beautiful romance had been upset by him. Kitty and I had got on wonderfully till I wrote that wretched story and inspired Billy to get into telephone relations with the dear girl. She was brilliantly intelligent. But everyone knows that a girl's intellect is the victim or creature of her environment. Kitty would become interested in cricket and scorn me because I have made a habit of pretending that I can't remember whether a full-pitch is a yorker, or a yorker a googley, and so on. But Billy old jug for sale there. He collects that kind of thing and is apt to bore me.

I kept in the background as the foolish game went on. Billy came in third man down, if that is the right jargon, and I could see that Kitty's very back became interested. I soon had reason to believe that he had spotted her, as you will see. He drove the first ball to the on or the off, I don't know or care which, but, as the cricket critics say, the leather was neatly stopped by someone or other. They said later that something was

obviously wrong with Braithwaite, for he wasn't on terms with the bowling. However, he stopped the second ball with considerable dexterity, for it was dangerously fast, and if it hadn't been stopped it would have hit his wicket. There was much emotion in Kitty's back. And then poor Billy was out to the next ball, having scored nothing. I never saw such an unhappy back as Kitty's. I went and sat down by her.

"What a shame!" she said, with tears in her eyes.

"Hirst was too straight for him," I said. "But—I believe it was you—you who bowled him out."

"Then I wish I'd not come," she replied, and that's how I knew that he knew she was there. I was furious Billy hadn't done better. If we won this game we were in the running for the championship.

I couldn't stand the game any more, so I pressed Kitty's hand and went away, saying, "I'll come back later." I wrote three quarto pages of an article before five o'clock, and when I returned to Lord's I found great excitement. If our side had done badly Yorkshire had done little better. And Billy had actually had his revenge on Hirst by bowling him. Besides that he had caught two other wretched Yorkshiremen just when they looked what is called "set." When I reached the ground he was in again and had apparently collared the bowling, for he was "lashing the leather" all over the shop in a very reckless manner. And the only chance he gave was one which made a fielder drop the ball in a hurry and examine his hands with much interest. Kitty, who had sat it all out, glowed like a rose and said cricket was very interesting after all.

And when Billy was at last caught and bowled for ninety, I persuaded her to come home to tea. Before I left Lord's I sent a note to Billy asking him to dinner. After all, we had won the match through him. But as we walked away I was very melancholy.

"My nose is out of joint," I said.

"Dear old nose," whispered Kitty, as she squeezed my arm.

"I'm caught and bowled," said I, "by a mere cricketer. By the way, though I hate him, I've asked him to dinner. I wonder what that telephone person is thinking of?"

"Poor old telephone person," said Kitty, softly. I turned and stared at her, but she looked straight in front of her so that I couldn't read her eyes. Women, even when young, are obscure. And the older they get the more obscure they are, and the more you are married to them the less you know.

"Perhaps you'll stay to dinner," I remarked. "Nevertheless, I loathe cricketers, Kitty."

"Dear old Ned," she repeated, affectionately.

They may be difficult to understand, but sometimes one sees it isn't because they are merely stupid. And yet a girl like this was going to be caught and bowled by poor Billy. We walked on in silence.

"One can't have everything," she said at last. She might have meant this for me. But perhaps it was for herself.

"I understand," I said. "No, I've never known it done."

I put on a brave and cheerful air as I opened the door, and yet I saw her eyes were dewy bright.

"Except—except upon the telephone," said Kitty.

Songs of the Great Schools.

I.

ETON—CHARTERHOUSE—WINCHESTER.

NO one who has ever attended a gathering of the present scholars or Old Boys of any of those great public schools of which England is so justly proud but must have been thrilled by the immense zeal and pathos with which the old school songs are sung.

> We've sung to the King—God bless him—
> We've sung to the lands of his rule;
> And now, with a lump in our gullets,
> We'll sing The Song of Our School!

It may be at Speech Day or Commemoration exercises, or at Lord's, or again it may be at sea, or on the veldt or prairie, or at mess in India; but wherever it takes place, to the observer more warmth and gusto are put into the singing of "Dulce Domum" or "Vale" than words or melody wholly account for—often more feeling shown than the singers wish to betray.

But they cannot help themselves. With the very first line the magic of association seizes them in its grip and they are wafted back into the past or forward into the future with the glorious traditions of *the* school shining before their eyes—with its honour for the nonce in their proud keeping.

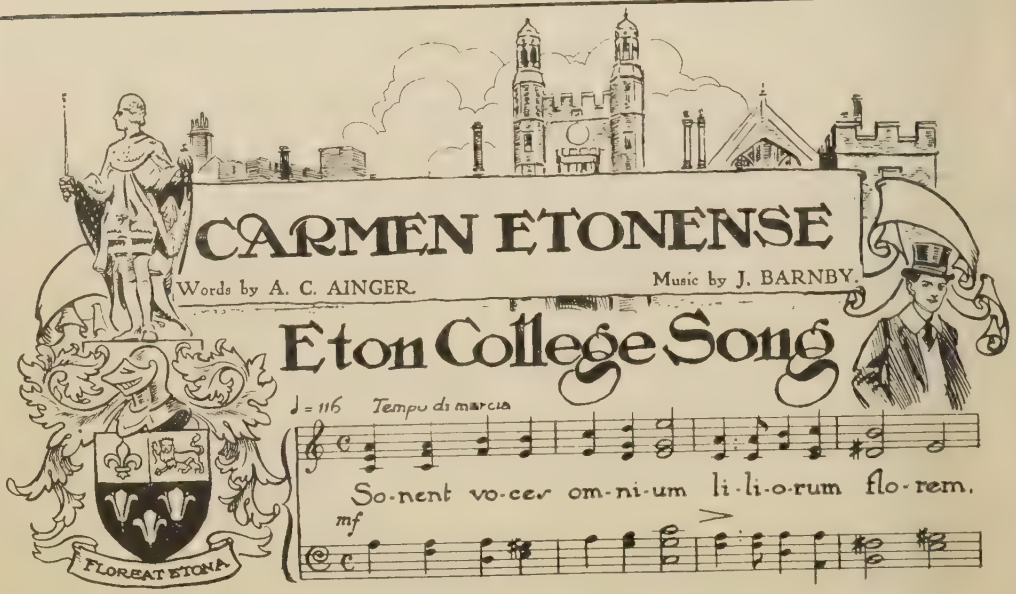
What, then, are these wonderful school songs of England which can produce such effects upon singers and hearers? It is astonishing to reflect that there was a time—only a few decades back—when many of them were not sung, or even heard of. For to an Eton boy it seems as though "Vale" or "Carmen Etonense" must go back to the Middle Ages—at least that Chatham, whose bust is in the hall, must have sung it. And, similarly, a Carthusian thinks of "Carmen Carthusianum" as belonging to the dim and misty past, and not merely an affair of sixty years back. The truth is that schoolboys changed a great deal during the Victorian era, and that the loyalty, affection, and *esprit de corps* which found a vent in song is only a modern trait. Winchester and Westminster had their special songs, it is true, but the scholars did not put their hearts into the singing.

In the case of Charterhouse, although the "Carmen Carthusianum" is the older song, and is always sung on great ceremonial occasions, yet "Charterhouse" is the school song by virtue of the votes of the boys, and is now the most popular.

History does not tell us what song Etonians sang in the old days, unless it was "God Save the King." For it must not be forgotten that the National Anthem of England was also the special anthem of the Eton boys, George III. being the particular patron of the school, and it is his birthday, the Fourth of June, they still celebrate. But, although the songs at Eton are not so definitely classified as at Harrow, the head master, the Hon. and Rev. Canon Lyttelton, writes: "The chief Eton song is to-day 'The Carmen Etonense.'"

"I fear we have but one song—'Dulce Domum,'" writes the head master of Winchester. "Several others have been written, but have not survived." This canticum, beloved of many generations of Wykehamists, dates back to 1681, and was written by John Reading, although the earliest printed copy is that given in "Harmonica Wiccamica," a collection published in 1780 by Philip Hayes, and republished in 1811. Another edition of the song was at this time published, with various modifications made by Peter Fussell, who was organist of the college from 1774 to 1801; and it is from this version that the modern form of the tune has been handed down. Only in comparatively recent years has it become possible to obtain a traditionally correct copy of the song. This has been provided by Dr. E. T. Sweeting, who writes: "No printed edition of the song which I have seen gives the melody, I will not say accurately—for one might as well speak of accuracy in a folk-song—but as it has traditionally come down to us at Winchester; and I have therefore thought it desirable to publish such an edition."

The identity of the author of the words is entirely lost, and was not known as far back as 1870. There is a tradition that the words were written by an erring scholar whilst confined to the college during holidays as a punishment. At any rate, the sentiment is that of that familiar ballad, "Home, Sweet Home," which it preceded by two centuries.

[Next month we shall give the songs of several others of the great Public Schools.]

CARMEN ETONENSE

Words by A. C. AINGER. Music by J. BARNBY.

Eton College Song

♩ = 116 *Tempo di marcia*

mf

So-nent vo-ces om-ni-um li-li-o-rum flo-rem.

cres.

dig-na pro-se-quen-tum lau-de Fun-da-to-rem!

f

Be-ne-fac-ti me-mo-res con-ci-na-mus, qua-lis

mp *cres.*

in a-lum-nos in-do-les fu-e-rit re-ga-lis.

f *dim*

Marcato.

Do-nec o-ras Ang-li-æ Al-ma lux fo-ve-bit,

mp *cres.* *f*

Ped.

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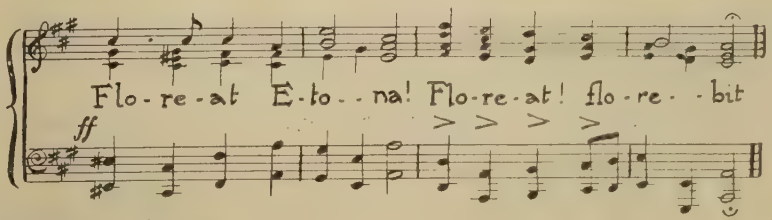
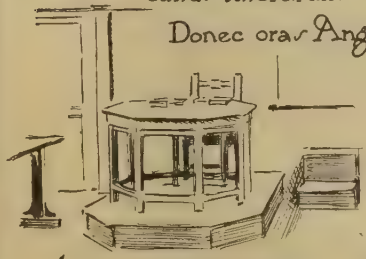


2 Stet domus Collegii
disciplinæ sedes,
donec amnis regii
unda lambet ædes!
Crescat diligentia
studium Musarum!
crescat cum scientia
cultus litterarum!

Donec oras Angliæ &c.



3 Nostra sint primordia
cum virtute pudor,
fides et concordia,
æmulusque rudor!
Jungat unus filios
amor erga Matrem!
cum magistris pueros
ut cum fratre fratrem!

Donec oras Angliæ &c.

4 Obsequamur regibus
modo jungant reges
libertatem legibus,
libertati leges!
Lege sic solutior
leges amet certas,
sic parendo tutior
nostra stet libertas!

Donec oras Angliæ &c.

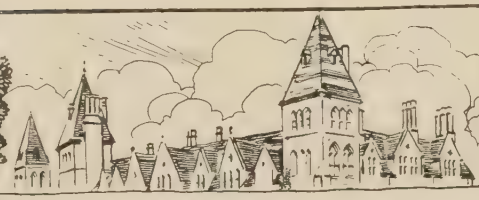
5 Justam ludus vindicet
cum labore partem!
dulce fœdus societ
cum Minerva Martem!
Sive causa gloriæ
pila, sive remus,
una laus victoriæ —
Matrem exornemus!

Donec oras Angliæ &c.

6. Mores Etonensibus
traditos colamus!
traditos parentibus
posteris tradamus!
Posterique posteris,
quotquot ibunt menses,
tradant idem seculis
carmen Etonenses

Donec oras Angliæ &c.

CHARTERHOUSE
School Song



Music by E D RENDALL

Voice

Piano

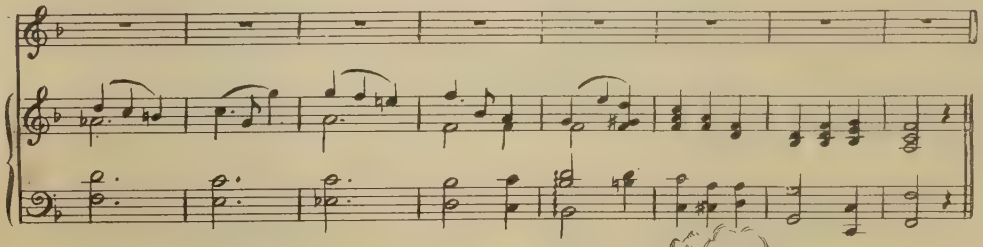
Char-ter-house!

Char-ter-house! mother of Englishmen, Maker of worlds that are yet for to

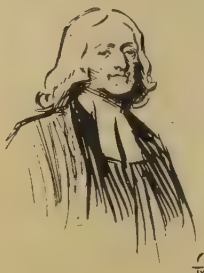
be, Great in the years gone by, Great in thy promise high, Thine be our

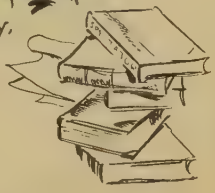
v7

love, for thy children are we. Thine be our love, for thy children are we



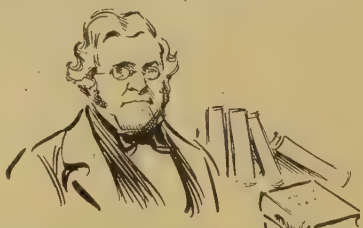
Addison, Addison, pearl of our brotherhood.
Never a word didst thou mingle with gall;
Charm of thy gentle wit
Gravity, grace of it,
Took the world captive and held it in thrall.



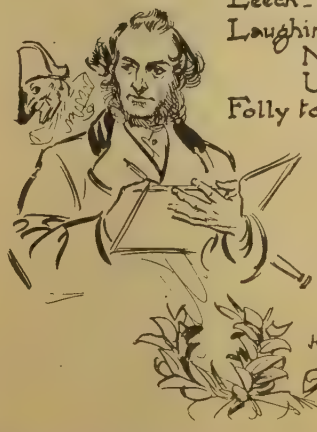


Wesley - John Wesley was one of our company,
Prophet unflinching and fearless of tongue;
Down the long years he went,
Spending yet never spent,
Serving his God with a heart ever young.

Havelock, Havelock, hero 'philosopher',
Silent of speech, and on battlefield grim,
In the dread days of fear
His the sole rescue near;
Long may our need find us soldiers like him!



Thackeray, Thackeray, kindliest cynical,
Weaver of words to entangle our ears,
Ne'er a more cunning pen,
Pictured the sons of men,
Witching a world into laughter and tears



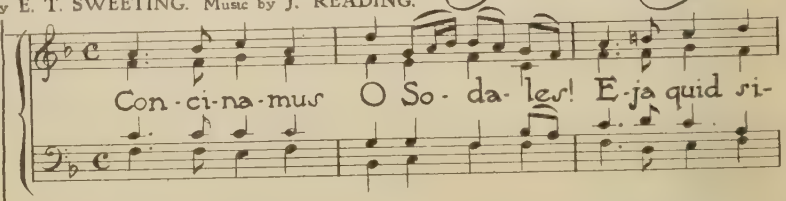
Leech - what John Leech; why he set us all laughing!
Laughing to see ourselves mirrored so true;
Nothing there mean or base,
Ugliness turned to grace,
Folly to wit in the pictures he drew.

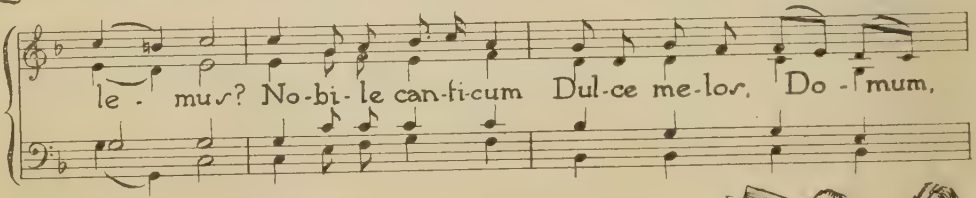
Years they are passing, 'tis well nigh three hundred
Since Sutton's wise hand and great heart set the way;
Charterhouse! mother!
Thy spirit none other
Shall kindle and move and inspire us to-day.

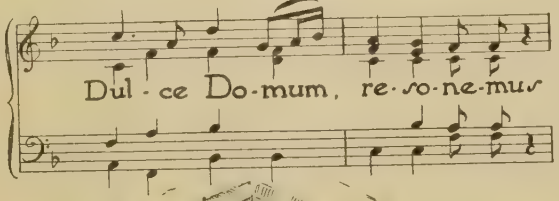
DOMUM

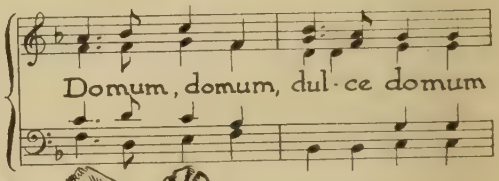
Winchester College Song

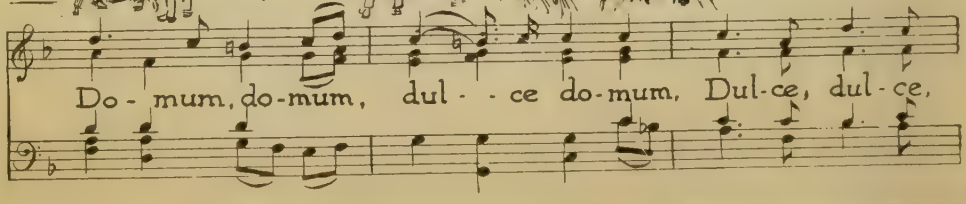
Edited by E. T. SWEETING. Music by J. READING.

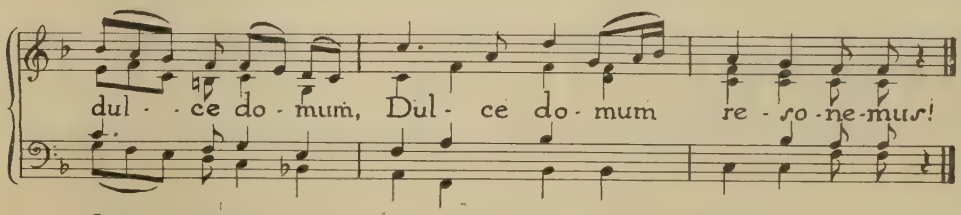










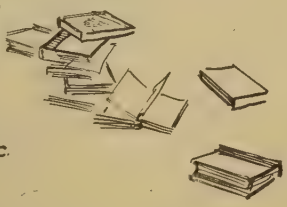


2 Appropinquat, Ecce! felix
Hora Gaudiorum.
Post grave taedium
Advenit omnium
Meta petita laborum.

Domum, Domum &c.

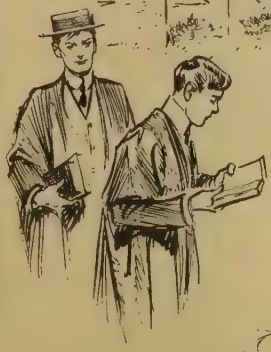
3 Musa libros mitte fessa,
Mitte pensa dura,
Mitte Negotium,
Jam datur otium;
Me mea mittito Cura!

Domum, Domum &c.



4 Ridet annus, prata rident,
Nosque rideamus;
Jam repetit Domum
Daulias advena
Nosque Domum repetamus

Domum, Domum, &c



5 Heus, Rogere, fer Caballos,
Eja! nunc eamus;
Limen amabile
Matris et oscula
Suaviter et repetamus

Domum, Domum &c

6 Concinamus ad Penates,
Vox et audiatur!
Phosphore, quid jubar,
Segnius emicans
Gaudia nostra moratur?

Domum, Domum, &c.

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THE GIFT IN SEASON.

By MAY EDGINTON.

Illustrated by Gilbert Holiday.

I.

IT was about two days before Christmas when the portly man came on the train into Red Deer Town—not five miles from the course of the Red Deer River—and announced himself as that omnipotence hated by the mine-manager, the overseers, and the miners collectively, the "'spec." He was, however, a new "'spec," not the devastating wind of a man sent down by the Winnipeg Consolidated Mines Company in the fall, and he seemed an easy-going fellow enough. He came on a snowy afternoon with his sister and a very little luggage, and asked the station-master in a lordly way if he knew whether the little dwelling at the disposal of the visiting inspector would be found ready for occupation. He drove thither, with his sister and his luggage, in the station buggy, hiring a Chinese loafer—for more Chinese crept into Red Deer than could find work in the mines—on his progress through the town, to cook for them. The little house, when opened for this surprise visit, was found inhabitable, having two bedrooms, a sitting-room, an outhouse for kitchen, sufficient chairs, beds, tables, and gas-stoves in working order. The Chinaman at once prepared a meal, out of no apparent materials, and the new inspector had eaten it and was looking domiciled by the time the news of his arrival had fled through the community. The mine-manager heard it first from the saloon-keeper, who brought the tidings to his office. He met his overseers as they were counting their labourers, yellows and whites, one by one up out of the shaft at evening, and said :—

"Comp'ny's sent a s'prise packet agen. Jake's sin him. He's up at Crocodile"—which was the name, goodness knows why, of the little dwelling against the mine appropriated to the visiting inspectors.

The overseers, two aged English boys, heard him with a curse or two.

"I'll up and see him to-night," said the manager, "jest to feel if anythin's in the wind."

The overseers opined that they'd wait till they were sent for.

"I'm off raight now," replied the manager, starting for Crocodile, perhaps two hundred yards away.

There he was opened to by a suave Chinaman, and found in the parlour a portly man, ginger-haired and youngish, who gave an impression of having dined. The room was hot from the gas-stove, and looked comfortable.

"Mist' Hocks, flom mines, master," said the Chinaman, announcing the manager.

The inspector looked through the smoke ascending from his pipe and smiled genially. Then he got up and shook hands ; then ordered drinks. It was borne in very pleasantly upon the manager that this was a man of different calibre to the searchlight who had visited them in the fall. He sat down, and said that he had just called.

"So I see," said the inspector. "I presume my visit is quite unexpected ?"

"Just at this time, sir," the manager began—"so near Christmas——"

"I *am* unexpected," the new-comer nodded.

"And the comp'ny sent someone round, last fall——"

"Just so." The inspector nodded affirmation.

"Name of Laycock," said the manager.

"Ah !" said the inspector, mixing drinks hospitably ; "and no doubt you were looking to see Mr. Laycock here again. But the company's given him the shove."

He noticed Mr. Hocks rubbing his hands, and went on :—

"Yes, your Mr. Laycock got the shove last week——"

"Huh !" said the manager. "He ain't *my* Mr. Laycock !"

Assimilating this, the portly man proceeded :—

"Didn't give you gentlemen here any more pleasure than he gave the company, hey ? Well, well, I'm in his shoes, anyway ; though

it's a bit near the time for a Christmas spree for me to be sent down inspecting, as you very justly remark. Nothing the matter with the whisky?"

The manager negatived the proposition.

"Put it away," advised the inspector, hospitably, "and have another, then. I'll ask you to show me over to-morrow morning, Mr. Hocks, but I won't do much overlooking till after Christmas. All going well, I shall spend a few days among you gentlemen."

"Take a week," suggested the manager, enthusiastically.

The portly man shook his head gently. "No, no," said he; "I'll have done what I want in a few days' time as far's I can see. There's my name, Mr. Hocks, and I hope there may be no ill-feeling between you and me or any of the boys through my position here. I am called upon, naturally, to render a sharp report to the company I serve. Take this."

He threw across the table a card, whereon Hocks read: "Jeremy B. Tant."

"I must be introduced," said the inspector, affably, "to the boys of this little place, if you'll be so good, Mr. Hocks. I have my sister with me, and a lady likes a little to-do this season."

As he spoke the door opened and the girl walked in upon them. It was not the habit in Red Deer for men to rise when a woman entered a room where they sat, the few women in the town not expecting, nor, perhaps, meriting, the respect; but as soon as he had set eyes on her Hocks rose instinctively and stared, speechless and abashed. She was about the prettiest thing in femininity that he had seen for years; black-haired, blue-eyed, lissom, young, clad in a gown cut as was no gown that had ever come into Red Deer. She stood by the door, daintily hesitant on seeing her brother in business conversation with a stranger, her hands behind her resting on the door-knob, as if in doubt whether to retire.

"SHE STOOD BY THE DOOR, DAINTILY HESITANT ON SEEING HER BROTHER IN BUSINESS CONVERSATION WITH A STRANGER."

"Come in, my dear," said Tant. She came forward smiling. "Mr. Hocks, my sister. Mr. Hocks is the manager of the mine, Anna."

Thus was Hocks the first of the community to receive introduction to the beauty. It was nine o'clock when he left Crocodile and went, elated, down the street to the saloon. Here he tumbled in upon a few miners and the two boy overseers drinking sparely, for last week's wages were low in their breeches pockets, and such as expected Christmas remittances from far, cold, unappreciative places called "home" had not received them yet. Hocks slapped his news down among them.

"Say, boys, he's the right sort. There's his birth certif'cate." The visiting-card was tossed on to the bar for inspection. "And strike me if he ain't brought the nicest little daisy of a sister you ever saw!"

Acclaim greeted this.

"She'll be coming down to be shown

round to-morrow, I should guess," said Hocks.

The two overseer boys drained their glasses and went home to wash and iron their shirts, and the saloon-keeper gave Hocks a free drink in return for such news as he had to exchange for it.

And in the morning the girl came with her brother to the mine. She did not go down, only stood and shuddered on the brink of the yawning shaft, and talked to Hocks and the English boys, refusing their eager offers of guidance and protection down below. So, very reluctantly, they had to leave her. The portly inspector descended, but he did not talk much, leaving most of the technical chatter to the mine-manager and his subordinates. They let out, incidentally, rivers of information; he drank the waters in.

It was a golden winter morning, bitter cold and crystal clear; sun shining afar on the tops of great Brown and Hooker, snowed against a blue sky. The girl Anna went leisurely, fur-wrapped, through the dirty town. Loafers stared at her with admiration as clean as it was deep; her sort was not often among them. Frumps of women, miners' hopeless wives, looked out after her from frowzy dwellings. The saloon-keepers—there were two, a great and a small, in the place—darted to their doors and lifted their hats. She smiled at all; a smile that had recklessness and dare-devilry behind it, cloaked in her demure girlhood. Presently, her walk taking her past the station yard, she met, coming out of it, a keen-faced young man in a hurry.

He slowed down and looked. She gave him one glance—seemingly cursory, as a girl's glance may be, but taking him all in, as a girl's glance can. Then she walked by leisurely, her hands in her muff and her chin tucked into the fur at her throat. The young man turned back into the yard and met the station-master.

"Here," said he to the latter, without ceremony, "who's that girl?"

"Young lady's the sister," replied the station-master, "of the feller as has got your boots on, Mr. Laycock."

"Eh? Eh?" said the young man, after a pause.

The station-master repeated his statement, and accepted a plug of tobacco from a very dandy pouch.

"Name of Tant," he added.

The young man thought for a while, looking after Anna's receding figure.

"So she's his sister," he remarked, by and by. "And when did the company send Mr. Tant round?"

"Came yesterday," replied the station-master. "Went into Crocodile; hired a China boy from the coal-yard. He's gone down with Hocks and the boys 's mornin'."

"That so?" murmured the young man.

"Ah!" said the station-master. Then he brightened, having been anticipating a dull Christmas for Red Deer, and sighting now on the horizon a radiant little star of promise. "Say, Mr. Laycock, you come to fight?"

"Maybe," replied Mr. Laycock. "Maybe not."

"He's got bulk," urged the station-master, "but you got the wire. Now, Mr. Laycock. Say, in the shed back of the coal-yard to-morrow mornin', and we'll make a purse. I'll guarantee y' a purse. Boys'll hev got their Christmas dollars 'n' all."

"You forget the lady," said Mr. Laycock, walking away.

Disappointed, the station-master darned city manners, and made caustic allusion to Mr. Laycock's last pair of official boots, as soon as the keen-faced young man was well out of hearing. Laycock went on, carrying his valise. As his late informant had made it apparent that Crocodile was occupied by his successor in office, he betook himself to the primitive hotel built right against the railway. There, baffling the proprietor's search for knowledge, and receiving similar questions from barmaid and hostess, under guise of sympathy, merely with a secretive smile, he booked a room and ascended to it. There he sat down on the bed-edge and surveyed an interesting situation.

The situation held various possibilities: a telegram to the company; a call to the nearest mounted-police station; a fight in the shed behind the coal-yard on Christmas morning; a show-up on the moment, and a general scrum. And there we must, as Mr. Laycock had observed to the station-master, remember the lady. For the situation also held, more potent than anything else in it, black hair, blue eyes, a lissom young figure, and a smile unequalled from Red Deer to Winnipeg.

Sitting thus on the bed-edge, the young man drew from his pocket an opened letter and re-read it. The letter began:—

"DEAR MR. LAYCOCK,—As soon as you have finished inspection of the down-river mines, we wish you to move on to Red Deer and get on to Hocks, if possible before Xmas. Enclosed please find seasonable expression of our appreciation.—Faithfully,

THE WINNIPEG CONSOLIDATED MINES CO., LTD."

And enclosed was a two-thousand-dollar bill, testifying to the company's recognition of a smart and efficient servant.

When Laycock had eaten and drunk, he went out into the town to glean things. He said remarkably little, but he gleaned enough to stimulate his interest. He kept away from the mine and from range of Crocodile's windows, and spent the afternoon between the two saloons.

"HE SAT ON THE BED-EDGE, PUTTING CARTRIDGES INTO ONE OF THE NICEST LITTLE COLTS EVER MADE."

Jake was the big saloon-keeper, and what he knew he imparted, not ill-pleased by the downing of the young "'spec." He said there was to be a little Christmas Eve party up at Crocodile, the new "'spec." being very social. Party was to start with a Christmas-tree, or something or 'nother lady-like, for Miss Tant; when she had retired, poker was to be the order of the night. "Play's high as the boys like," said the saloon-keeper. "Tant, he ain't no strait-weskit. He ain't in no holy orders. He's one o' ourselves, apparently. Hocks, he thinks a darned lot o' Tant."

These digs at his own degree of popularity the superseded inspector received with his dry smile, and after receiving went back to the hotel.

"I wouldn't be s'prised after all," said the saloon-keeper, soliloquizing after him, "if it came to an exhibition to-morrow."

But if Laycock meant fighting, it was not with fists, as the saloon-keeper would have seen if he could have looked at the inspecting-engineer in his room ten minutes later. He sat again on the bed-edge, putting cartridges into one of the nicest little Colts ever made, and he still smiled. But the smile meant mischief.

II.

THE girl Anna was in a frock that made the men open their eyes, with red ear-rings in her little ears, against a background of dusky hair, and high-heeled slippers. There were assembled the bigger saloon-keeper, the mine-manager, and the two overseers, all in best clothes and with pockets full of week's wages, Christmas remittances, and any other coin they could get together, expectant of a night's deadly keen play. Anna opened the outer door to them herself, and brought the four staring creatures into the parlour. There were placed ready—evidence of the inspector's promise, if any were needed—a table with cards upon it and chairs drawn up. The girl, hectic and beautiful, made a dainty gesture of scorn at these arrangements.

"Amusing way to spend a night!" she smiled. "But my brother says you'll enjoy it."

Four hearty assents came. She went on:—

"But it's *my* party first, gentlemen, and you'll give me an hour's pleasure before I'm sent to bed, eh? I've prepared my Christmas surprise in the kitchen, and we're going to have some fun before all this serious business—*my* kind of fun, eh, gentlemen? I'm going to take you in one by one to have your Christmas surprise; and how you will surprise each other!" She laughed out gaily. "Now, who, I wonder, shall have his little lucky-bag first?"

She stood and wondered for a minute, finger on lip, blue eyes surveying them as they stood before her, sheepish, admiring; then chose the saloon-keeper.

"You first," she said, delightfully; "you're the biggest boy by far."

Amid the ready laugh that arose at this she slipped her slim hand into the saloon-keeper's and led him to the door, the big man flushing and chuckling like a child. Over her shoulder she glanced back deliciously at the others.

"Your time's coming," said she, as she disappeared. "Wait in patience. Be good."

More laughter followed her. They sat down to wait.

"Isn't she a little diamond?" said the mine-manager.

The English boys were bright-eyed and roused from their acquired dejection. They drew deep breaths, chinked the money absently in their breeches pockets—though blue eyes had for the moment put cards out of their heads—and waited in what patience they might till she came back and chose the mine-manager. He was proud to hold the lady's hand and to be led forth to the out-house, where she had prepared her girlish "surprises."

The English boys sat silent, with memories that the girl Anna had conjured. It was perhaps six minutes before she returned. They sprang up on her entry, home manners recurring, and she slipped a hand through the arm of one. All her face laughed but her eyes, and they looked anywhere but at the boys.

"It doesn't matter which comes first," she said, leading out her choice.

In five minutes she was back again.

"Last come, best served," she told the remainder, with hectic spots of colour in her cheeks. "You'll get the biggest surprise of all, because, see, there's all the others gone before you to increase it."

"Lady of Mystery" the overseer called her as she led him through the back door from the house, across the yard or two of paving to the kitchen. "The boys are very quiet," said he while they went. She led him swiftly in, shut the door as swiftly upon his surprise, and shut out the sound of arising voices from her ears with her hands pressed frantically upon them as she fled back to the house. She ran through like a hunted thing to the parlour and, dropping into a chair at the table, put her face down and let the tears come. The second overseer had seemed a nice boy.

Knocking came suddenly upon the outer door. She lifted her head quickly and listened, fear in her face, until the knocking was repeated; then she rose and went to open the door to a keen-faced young man who put his foot immediately over the threshold while she barred ingress.

She remembered him instantly as the traveller she had met coming from the station in the morning.

"Who are you?" she asked. "And what do you want?"

He answered the question with another.

"You are Miss Anna Tant?"

"Well——?"

"I have come, very impertinently, to beg an invitation to your Christmas party."

"What possible right——" she began, defiantly.

"No right," said he, looking at her intently, with much admiration in the intentness. "I come as a suppliant. I met you outside the station this morning."

"Did you?" she said, indifferently. He read the consciousness of recognition in her face, however, and smiled a little.

"May I come in?"

Her eyes, that had avoided him, flashed up to his.

"No!"

"Why?"

"Because I—I—I——"

"I am sure that a lady will be kind to a lonely fellow at Christmas-time."

"I don't want you. There!"

"Why don't you want me?"

"Conceit!" she laughed, with no mirth. "You'd be one too many. My brother has visitors already——"

"I know. Big Jake, the manager, and the overseers."

She stared.

"I've been all day here," he added, "and I heard. But where is everybody?"

The house was indeed very quiet. The

girl pulled herself together and began to explain something of a "surprise gift" scheme; they were all in the kitchen at the back; presently they would play poker. The party was complete. Would he go away?

Her eyes cried "Go!" and her hands moved as if with desire to push him outside. Meanwhile his foot remained planted firmly on the threshold, and, looking at her, his own eyes became at once keener and softer. She looked afraid, her bosom heaving, her cheeks flushed.

He shook his head.

"No, I'm coming in, please." He smiled. "You don't know how cheerful and sociable I can be. Let me join the boys in the kitchen. And can't you find a 'surprise' for me?"

"Oh! I could find a surprise for you," said she, recklessly.

But she would not move, so he laid his hands on her arms, put her gently back, and stepped into the passage.

"I won't have you at my party!" she cried, stamping her foot.

"See here, little girl," said Laycock, "I'm going to join you to-night. Hark to me. I'm Laycock, inspecting-engineer to the Winnipeg Consolidated Mines Company. How's that?"

She looked ready to faint. He slipped an arm round her.

"Don't be frightened of me," he said, softly.

"I'm not frightened of you," she gasped, pushing the arm away.

"Well, then?"

"Don't come in! Go away, and call to see my brother in the morning."

"I'm dead set on meeting him to-night."

She leaned against the wall, pinching her underlip between her finger and thumb, her eyes flickering. Laycock watched her keenly; presently she met his glance.

"Oh, very well," she flung out. "Come on, then."

Her cheeks fired again; her bosom heaved. She caught his hand in slim, soft fingers. "Come on!"

She hurried him down the passage, averting her head so that he could barely get a glimpse of her clear-cut profile, only of a downward sweep of dusky hair on the nape of her neck, and of a small ear with a red ear-ring in it. The door of the outhouse was open, and light and subdued voices came from it.

"Go in," she said to Laycock, giving him a little push as they crossed the threshold. She shut the door upon him immediately and fled away. The engineer turned to the door to pull it open again and call her back, and instantly came a quick voice behind him.

"Throw your hands *up*, sir!"

You don't trifle with an order like that in the North-West, and it is prudence, not cowardice, to obey it. Laycock threw his hands over his head and wheeled round. In place of the half-dozen or so men he had expected to see were only two—a portly, ginger-haired fellow and a Chinaman. The ginger-haired man had him covered.

The inspecting-engineer cursed his own lack of imagination.

"Now that you are in a suitable situation to answer questions politely," said the ginger-haired man, "who are you, sir, anyway?"

"I'm Laycock, inspector to the Winnipeg Mines Company."

"Ah-h-h!" said Tant. The Chinee stood and smiled yellowly.

"I needn't ask, then," said Tant, "to what I am indebted for the honour. I hadn't anticipated such a contingency as the company sending round a man so close on Christmas. I didn't expect you, Mr. Laycock. Still, as you are here, my little sister did quite right in showing you in on me. I haven't a great deal of time to spare, since we intend getting on the midnight train; so we must proceed to leading questions. What have you on you?"

"Very little," replied the engineer, thankfully.

"I'm sorry for that," said Tant; "but where you expect nothing a little seems a lot. As I said, we didn't expect *you*. My late visitors came well provided, and left *me* well provided. Sounds like a conundrum, don't it, Mr. Laycock? But you'll hev a better understanding presently. Go very politely through the gentleman's pockets, Jacky."

The Chinee approached, found the Colt almost first, and laid it away from reach on the table, smiling widely.

"Ah! Oh!" said Tant, on that. "Slow with your iron, rayther, Mr. Laycock, aren't you?"

"I'm not reckoned so," replied Mr. Laycock, briefly.

The Chinee went delicately over him, Laycock suffering it without physical resistance, though he went through most of a fairly exhaustive vocabulary during the process. Tant sat and laughed with cocked revolver. When the Chinaman had relieved their visitor of a gold watch, a tie-pin, some

dollar-bills, and loose change, he stood back and looked at his master.

Tant nodded. "Cut, Jacky," said he.

Jacky cut, and came back with a rope, stick, and some strips of rag.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Laycock," said Tant, "that we can't be as considerate for your comfort as we would be under other circs. We must tie you up."

The engineer expressed his opinion emphatically.

"You'd make your mother wonder, young man," said Tant, "if she heard you. 'Fraid it must be done. Y' see"—he squinted down his barrel, which had not wavered once—"it's like this. I'm showing a clean pair of heels. I allus do. I'll leave you alive and tied up till your friends find you, or——" He opened his eyes wide and fixed them on Laycock's face.

"SHE CAUGHT HIS HAND IN SLIM, SOFT FINGERS."

The Chinaman manipulated the rope and stick so that in five minutes the engineer was trussed up like a fowl, in a sitting position, with his wrists tied down by his heels, his ankles bound, and a stick thrust under his knees to hold things firm. They gagged him ingeniously with the strips of rag.

"The others are wearing the pear-shaped patent," Tant explained; "but we've run short, and can't treat you all alike."

The others? Where were the others? Poor gagged, trussed, cheated wretches! Laycock's brain was in a turmoil. He could not speak, but his eyes asked questions, which Tant answered.

"The Christmas party's down at the bottom of the old prospecting shaft by the back garden here. You'll join 'em. Oh, you won't be lonely. It'll be quiet, very quiet, but not in any ways lonely. We'll let you down with a rope, and when the line gives out you'll drop the rest. 'Tain't enough to hurt r'ally. The bindings keep you together nicely. Shaft's not much more nor sixty feet deep, I should say. 'Course, as far's my interest's concerned, I might hev told Jacky jest to drop you in an' let you bounce, but I don't say that. I go to the expense of a good rope. That's my humanity. I'm humane, I am. Tek hold, Jacky."

One on either side of him, they bore the human bundle swiftly out to where, under the stars, the shaft yawned black. Tant had a last word of consolation to offer while Laycock swung over the edge.

"You'll be found all right bime-by, my son, efter you've hed time for all seasonable re-flections. This old shaft's got a communicating channel with the pits. Fellers

struck up into it only a few weeks back, so that spry gentleman that manages the place informed me last night; hole big enough for a man to creep through—if he's lengthened out properly." He laughed a little at the swinging bundle. "Leggo, Jacky," he ordered.

The rope slid through their hands, they straining back on it, for the engineer was no light weight, his spareness being made up for by big bone and muscle. To Laycock it seemed an eternity while he spun round at the end of that dangling rope. Suddenly his progress ceased. He guessed that he was going to drop, and he dropped, a fall of about twelve feet perhaps, on to some bundle much like himself. He rolled off, and touched another bundle, from which inarticulate grunts issued.

"Five of us!" said Laycock's consciousness, "and not one can help the others." Somehow he worked into a sitting position, and so remained, merely bruised and sore, the binding-up, as Tant had prophesied, having saved any broken bones.

He could look up and see, an illimitable distance above, something lighter than the surrounding blackness, which must be the sky, and set in that lighter something was a golden eye, which must be a star. Time passed invisibly. Now and again the others rolled against him, wrestling with their bonds, but he sat still. He knew that by no effort could any of them loosen the knots that the Chinaman had tied; it was better to save strength for the fast that was before them. He began to count; no one would work to-morrow, and probably not the next day. That was forty-eight hours. A distant rumble came from above and quivered in the mine. That must be the midnight train, on which would slip away the ginger-haired man and that little blue-eyed devil of a girl. Women were—well, they *were*. They licked creation. But he remembered how she had tried to prevent his coming into Crocodile.

The train stopped, and passed over.

It must be about ten minutes after twelve.

Very soon after that a horrible little sound smote upon the engineer's practised ear. A tiny swish—drip—trickle, away in the mine below.

"Water!" sang his brain.

He knew of the tiny leakages that had been watched for the past month. Supposing that now—on this very night—as if waiting for this hour—the flood-demon had broken loose? Had the miners really tapped the eternal springs that fed Red Deer River five miles away? If so, could the water rise to the height of the floor of the prospecting shaft, or only fill the caverns below? Would——

Drip—drip—drip.

Laycock stayed quite silent, with the wonderful clearness and acuteness of hearing which falls upon a man if he is listening for death. The whole working plans of the mine came into his head and fixed like a clear map. He knew the water could rise to them. Two or three strangled grunts came from near by, and suddenly the other men, who had been quiet for some while, rolled against him and against each other, pulling at their bonds. They had heard it too, then.

Swish — swish — swish, very faint. He began to wrestle with his own ropes in the catching panic, and tried to work his jaws against the gag till the sweat rolled off him and his heart laboured. Drip—drip went on fiendishly. It was ghastly cold, but no one of the labouring, panting men felt that. While they rolled and pulled, with praying hearts or cursing hearts, according to their calibre—

"Hi! Hi! Hi!" sounded faintly, far away below.

The men could feel each other listening intently through the darkness, though no one could call an answer back to that "Hi! Hi! Hi!" It came again, nearer, in long, shrill, echoing calls, repeated at intervals for perhaps a quarter of an hour, until it was near at hand. Each man had somehow slued round in the direction of the voice, and was watching for a light. In twenty minutes, that seemed eternity, a glimmer shone into the shaft and showed the opening through which it came—the tunnel sloping down into the bowels of the mine. The light brightened, and stooping through the narrowing passage came the girl Anna, grimed with coal, white with terror, soaked to her knees with water, a knife in her hand, and a Davy safety lamp, more beautiful than the sun and moon and all the stars, slung round her neck. Through she crept panting, till she stood upright by them in the bottom of the shaft. They could see each other now, thrown there, trussed like fowls, tortured with the stiff gags, aching and sweating; the big saloon-keeper and the manager livid with fear; the English boys looking wicked as devils; the engineer, still calm, trying to compel her with his eyes to release him first. For she was a little traitress among furious men, whom her baiting had made as wild beasts.

As if knowing what was in his mind—it

"SHE STOOD UPRIGHT BY THEM IN THE BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT."

may have been in hers too—she came quickly to him, kneeled down, and, with cold fingers that trembled against his face, tore off the calico. Then she sawed desperately through his bonds and helped him up, stiff and cramped, to his feet.

"Give me the knife!" he said, his freed voice echoing up the shaft. She gave it silently, her eyes on his face, and he cut them free—the English boys first, because they were gentlemen and could be counted on to stand by a woman. By the time the last bonds were cut and the last gag pulled out the drip—drip was growing more steady and insistent. Laycock put his arm round the girl as she cowered against him.

"Well," he said, roughly, "you've saved us!"

"Efter sending us down to death," gritted the saloon-keeper. "Mighty good, you hussy. Your reprieve's arrived too late, bet you!" and began to swear horribly.

"Run!" she gasped, shaking against Laycock. "Run! The water's coming up! We've got to wade through to the other shaft."

It was no time for recrimination. They crept, one by one, through the passage, an overseer first with the lamp, the others stooping after him, Laycock last with the girl. He was filled with a grim, mad desire to save her, and he let the others test the foothold. It was a race for life through the rising water, in ghostly dimness, through the echoing caverns; but the boy who led them knew his ground, inch by inch, and he never stopped. Now and again they had to bend low under the black roof, and then the water touched their chins. The engineer had the girl's waist gripped in his arm, and dragged her on till, soused and grimy, the whole party stood under the shaft; and the cage hung there.

"How're we to get up?" said the manager, hoarsely.

The girl answered him. "How I came down. Our Chinee boy is up on top, working that. For Heaven's sake don't frighten him till we get on ground. I've promised him a twenty-dollar bill when he brings us up. For Heaven's sake, men, not a word!"

They crowded in and she sent her voice, loud and shrill, up the shaft. The cage creaked up, and through it, as they neared the top, they could see the Chinee, sick-white under the moon, shivering with trepidation and impelled only by cupidity, working it.

"Givee me, missee!" he screamed, before the men could tumble out. She flung something from the bosom of her frock to him and he caught it and scudded away like the wind. They tore after him, swearing, all but Laycock, and he stayed with the girl. The two stood there, wet and silent, for full half a minute, with a strange consciousness of each other swaying upon them. At last:—

"They'll never catch Jacky," said Laycock.

"What w-w-will they d-d-do——?"

"They'll go home and change their wet clothes, and drink and sleep," he answered, looking at her with his keen, soft eyes. "You will do so too."

He hurried her to deserted Crocodile. She could direct him to matches, and he lighted a gas-stove and set on water. When he had finished these tasks he saw her fallen into a chair, utterly exhausted, watching his movements.

"Afraid, little girl?" he asked, coming to her.

"I'm alone," she answered.

He understood that.

"Your brother went on the train, I s'pose? Why didn't you run too, eh?"

"'Cause you were down the mine for Christmas," she ripped out.

"Eh? Eh?" said Laycock, slowly.

"And when we got to the station I ran off. Jeremy said something about the water *might*——"

"So you came back?"

She nodded.

"I shall have to leave you alone to-night," he said. "Take off your wet clothes at once. Make coffee. Drink anything strong you've got. Lock all the doors. And"—he started to go, but looked round, smiling queerly—"I shall come back too."

The inspecting-engineer went to the hotel, and battered on the door till someone came down cursing to let him in. Then he sent for a bottle of whisky, drank most of it, changed his clothes, and found his second revolver. He sat on the bed-edge priming it, as he had done with his little Colt a few hours before, and again he smiled. He did not go to bed, but slipped out of the hotel about five o'clock, and kept a vigil on Crocodile's door-step. He was afraid, for the next few hours, for the girl. But his late companions in peril had gone home and drunk themselves to warmth and sleep with as much whisky as they had handy.

And as he still leaned up against the door, about eight o'clock there came dipping over the hills into Red Deer a superintendent of the Mounted Police and two men, on tired horses, seeking their Christmas breakfast, having been out all night after cattle-raiders. To them came a keen-faced, grim young man, who laid before them briefly such an extraordinary story as is quite common or garden chronicle in the North-West, prefacing his narrative with: "I'm Laycock, inspecting-engineer to the Winnipeg Mines Company," and ending it by: "And, Mr. Superintendent, I want those two men of yours to close the two saloons till those boys who're just waking up have seen round things a bit. If the town gets drunk this morning, it gets mad!"

So when Big Jake awoke he found on his door-step a weary policeman with a business carbine, and when the overseers and the mine-manager trooped thither on waking to

drink over their grievances, they found no drink to be had. The same conditions prevailed at the other saloon down town. Laycock had gone back to Crocodile.

The girl let him in, then walked before him into the parlour, and there turned and faced him.

"What shall I do?" she began.

"Take my orders?" he asked, in a whisper.

They were reading each other's eyes. The same tremendous thing was smiting each at the same moment. Laycock was a philosopher who did not fight the divine and irrevocable. He took the girl into his arms and kissed her.

"Eat the breakfast I'll make," said he.

They were eating the breakfast—rather, looking at it, or, rather, looking at each other across it—when four angry men trooped to the door. They had half the angry town behind them, but, thanks to the hungry policemen on the saloon door-steps, every man was sober as a judge. They flung the door open without preliminaries, and walked in upon Laycock and the siren. The inspecting-engineer stood up, with something polished gleaming in his right hand. His left reassured Anna.

"If there's any account to settle, gentlemen," said he, "that'll be *my* affair."

"'IF THERE'S ANY ACCOUNT TO SETTLE, GENTLEMEN,' SAID HE, 'THAT'LL BE MY AFFAIR.'"

Ruskin on Pictures.

Some of the finest passages in Ruskin's works—passages unique of their kind in the English language—consist of descriptions of certain paintings which had moved him either to admiration or dislike. But it must often have happened that the reader of these descriptions has never seen the picture referred to, and that he has felt that to have a reproduction of the painting before him as he reads would add immensely to his interest. The following article is an attempt to satisfy this feeling in the case of some of the best-known examples of the kind.

LET us start with the famous description of Turner's "Slave Ship"—a picture with which very few persons in this country are familiar. It has been for many years in America, and the reproduction of it which we are able to give below cannot fail to be of great interest to all lovers of art. Here is the well-known passage from "Modern Painters"—a passage of which it is not too much to say that it is as great a work of its kind as the picture it describes:—

"I think the noblest sea that Turner has ever painted, and, if so, the noblest certainly ever painted by man, is that of 'The Slave Ship.' It is a sunset on the Atlantic, after prolonged storm; but the storm is partially lulled, and the torn and streaming rain-clouds are moving in scarlet lines to lose themselves in the hollow of the night. The whole surface of sea included in the picture is divided into two ridges of enormous swell, not high, nor local, but a low broad heaving of the whole ocean, like the lifting of its bosom by deep-drawn breath after the torture of the storm. Between these two ridges the fire of the sunset falls along the trough of the sea, dyeing it with an awful but glorious light, the intense and lurid splendour which burns like gold, and bathes like

THE SLAVE SHIP. From the Painting by Turner.

By permission of Messrs. George Allen & Co., the publishers of "Turner and Ruskin."

THE OLD SHEPHERD'S CHIEF MOURNER. From the Painting by Landseer.

From a Photograph by F. Hanfstaengl.

blood. Along this fiery path and valley the tossing waves by which the swell of the sea is restlessly divided lift themselves in dark, indefinite, fantastic forms, each casting a faint and ghastly shadow behind it along the illumined foam. They do not rise everywhere, but three or four together in wild groups, fitfully and furiously, as the under strength of the swell compels or permits them; leaving between them treacherous spaces of level and whirling water, now lighted with green and lamp-like fire, now flashing back the gold of the declining sun, now fearfully dyed from above with the undistinguishable images of the burning clouds, which fall upon them in flakes of crimson and scarlet, and give to the reckless waves the added motion of their own fiery flying. Purple and blue, the lurid shadows of the hollow breakers are cast upon the mist of night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty* ship as it labours amidst the lightning of the sea, its thin masts written upon the sky in lines of blood, girded with condemnation in that fearful hue which signs the sky with horror, and mixes its flaming flood with the sunlight, and, cast far along the desolate heave of the sepulchral waves, incarnadines the multitudinous sea."

In Ruskin's view painting is a language to convey *ideas*, that being the greatest painting wherein most ideas are conveyed. This, of course, is not the view of most artists, who value technique quite apart from subject. But here is Ruskin's point of view, as set forth by the example of Landseer's picture, "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner":—

"Take, for instance, one of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen: 'The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner.' Here the exquisite execution of the glossy and crisp hair of the dog, the bright sharp touching of the green bough beside it, the clear painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket, are language—language clear and expressive in the highest degree. But the close pressure of the dog's breast against the wood, the convulsive clinging of the paws, which has dragged the blanket off the trestle, the total powerlessness of the head laid, close and motionless, upon its folds, the fixed and tearful fall of the eye in its utter hopelessness, the rigidity of repose which marks that there has been no motion nor change in the trance of agony since the last blow was struck on the coffin-lid, the quietness and gloom of the chamber, the spectacles

*She is a slaver, throwing her slaves overboard. The near sea is encumbered with corpses.

marking the place where the Bible was last closed, indicating how lonely has been the life, how unwatched the departure, of him who is now laid solitary in his sleep — these are all thoughts—thoughts by which the picture is separated at once from hundreds of equal merit, as far as mere painting goes, by which it ranks as a work of high art, and stamps its author, not as the neat imitator of the texture of a skin, or the fold of a drapery, but as the Man of Mind."

Let us next take an example of Ruskin's method of treating a picture which, for some reason or other, he disliked. The following is an extract from his description of Claude's painting, "The Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca." The biting satire of the opening is not less characteristic than the unforgettable description of the Campagna with which it ends :—

THE MARRIAGE OF ISAAC AND REBECCA. From the Painting by Claude.

"The foreground is a piece of very lovely and perfect forest scenery, with a dance of peasants by a brook-side ; quite enough subject to form, in the hands of a master, an impressive and complete picture. On the other side of the brook, however, we have a piece of pastoral life ; a man with some bulls and goats tumbling head foremost into the water, owing to some sudden paralytic affection of all their legs. Even this group is one too many ; the shepherd had no business to drive his flock so near the dancers, and the dancers will certainly frighten the cattle. But when we look farther into the picture, our feelings receive a sudden and violent shock, by the unexpected appearance, amidst things pastoral and musical, of the military ; a number of Roman soldiers riding in on hobby-horses, with a leader on foot, apparently encouraging them to make an immediate and decisive charge on the musicians. Beyond the soldiers is a circular temple, in exceedingly bad repair ; and close beside it, built against its very walls, a neat water-mill in full work. By the mill flows a large river with a weir all across it. The weir has not been made for the mill (for that receives its water from the hills by a trough carried over the temple), but it is particularly ugly and monotonous in its line of fall, and the water below forms a dead-looking pond, on which some people are fishing in punts. The banks of this river resemble in contour the later geological formations around London, constituted chiefly of broken pots and oyster-shells. At an inconvenient distance from the water-side stands a city, composed of twenty-five round towers and a pyramid. Beyond the city is a handsome bridge ; beyond the

bridge, part of the Campagna, with fragments of aqueducts; beyond the Campagna, the chain of the Alps; on the left, the cascades of Tivoli.

"Let us analyse the separate subjects a little in this ideal work of Claude's. Perhaps there is no more impressive scene on earth than the solitary extent of the Campagna of Rome under evening light. Let the reader imagine himself for a moment withdrawn from the sounds and motion of the living world, and sent forth alone into this wild and wasted plain. The earth yields and crumbles beneath his foot, tread he never so lightly, for its substance is white, hollow, and carious, like the dusty wreck of the bones of men. The long knotted grass waves and tosses feebly in the evening wind, and the shadows of its motion shake feverishly along the banks of ruins that lift themselves to the sunlight. Hillocks of mouldering earth heave around him, as if the dead beneath were struggling in their sleep; scattered blocks of black stone, four-square, remnants of mighty edifices, not one left upon another, lie upon them to keep them down. A dull purple poisonous haze stretches level along the desert, veiling its spectral wrecks of massy ruins, on whose rents the red light rests, like a dying fire on defiled altars. The blue ridge of the Alban Mount lifts itself against a solemn space of green, clear, quiet sky. Watch-towers of dark clouds stand steadfastly along the promontories of the Apennines. From the plain to the mountains, the shattered aqueducts, pier beyond pier, melt into the darkness, like shadowy and countless troops of funeral mourners, passing from a nation's grave."

Such a passage as the following is an excellent example of the same kind of treatment, and also of the vast increase of interest which the reader feels when the picture and its details are before him as he reads:—

"I suppose there is no event in the whole life of Christ to which, in hours of doubt or fear,

THE CHARGE TO PETER. From the Cartoon by Raphael.

From a Photograph supplied by Mansell.

men turn with more anxious thirst to know the close facts of it, or with more earnest and passionate dwelling upon every syllable of its recorded narrative, than Christ's showing Himself to His disciples at the Lake of Galilee. There is something pre-eminently open, natural, full fronting our disbelief in this manifestation. The others, recorded after the Resurrection, were sudden, phantom-like, occurring to men in profound sorrow and wearied agitation of heart; not, it might seem, safe judges of what they saw. But the agitation was now over. They had gone back to their daily work, thinking still their business lay net-wards, unmeshed from the literal rope and drag. 'Simon Peter saith unto them, "I go a-fishing." They say unto him, "We also go with thee."' True words enough,

and having far echo beyond those Galilean hills. That night they caught nothing; but when the morning came, in the clear light of it, behold a figure stood on the shore. They were not thinking of anything but their fruitless hauls. They had no guess who it was. It asked them simply if they had caught anything. They said 'No'; and it tells them to cast yet again. And John shades his eyes from the morning sun with his hand, to look who it is; and, though the glinting of the sea, too, dazzles him, he makes out who it is at last; and poor Simon, not to be outrun this time, tightens his fisher's coat about him, and dashes in over the nets. One would have liked to see him swim those hundred yards and stagger to his knees on the beach.

"Well, the others get to the beach too, in time, in such slow way as men in general do get, in this world, to its true shore, much impeded by that wonderful 'dragging the net with fishes'; but they get there—seven of them in all—first the Denier, and then the slowest believer, and then the quickest believer, and then the two throne-seekers, and two more, we know not who.

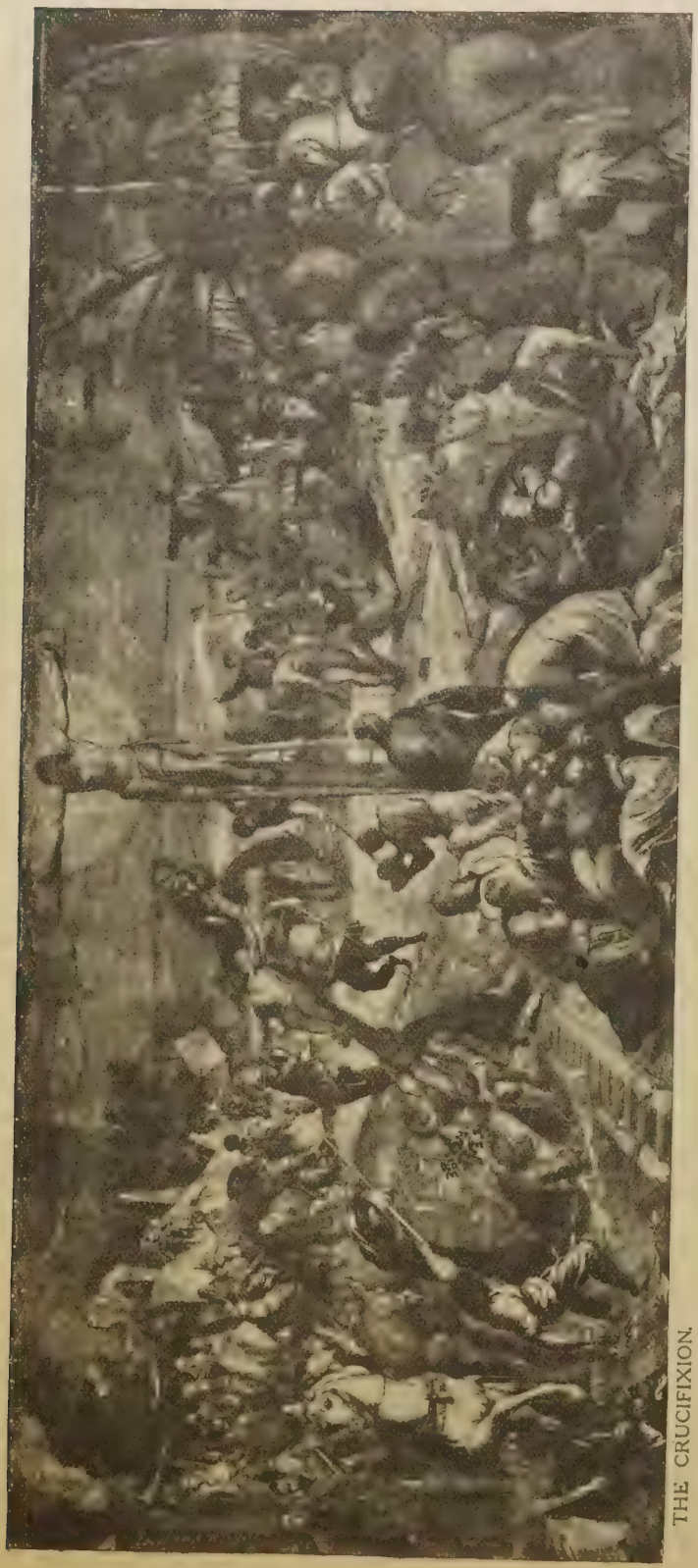
"They sit down on the shore face to face with Him, and eat their broiled fish as He bids. And then, to Peter, all dripping still, shivering and amazed, staring at Christ in the sun, on the other side of the coal fire—thinking a little, perhaps, of what happened by another coal fire, when it was colder, and having had no word once changed with him by his Master since that look of His—to him, so amazed, comes the question, 'Simon, lovest thou Me?' Try to feel that a little, and think of it till it is true to you; and then take up that infinite monstrosity and hypocrisy—Raphael's cartoon of 'The Charge to Peter.' Note, first, the bold fallacy—the putting *all* the Apostles there, a mere lie to serve the Papal heresy of the Petric supremacy, by putting them all in the background while Peter receives the charge, and making them all witnesses to it. Note the handsomely-curled hair and neatly-tied sandals of the men who had been out all night in the sea-mists and on the slimy decks. Note their convenient dresses for going a-fishing, with trains that lie a yard along the ground, and goodly fringes—all made to match—an apostolic fishing costume. Note how Peter especially (whose chief glory was in his wet coat *girt* about him, and naked limbs) is enveloped in folds and fringes, so as to kneel and hold his keys with grace. No fire of coals at all, nor lonely mountain shore, but a pleasant Italian landscape, full of villas and churches, and a flock of sheep to be pointed at; and the whole group of Apostles, not round Christ, as they would have been naturally, but straggling away in a line, that they may all be shown.

"The simple truth is that the moment we look at the picture we feel our belief of the whole thing taken away. There is, visibly, no possibility of that group ever having existed, in any place, or on any occasion. It is all a mere mythic absurdity and faded concoction of fringes, muscular arms, and curly heads of Greek philosophers."

Here is another example of the point of view that *ideas* are the most important quality of pictures. It is based on a work which many critics consider the finest in the world—Tintoretto's "Crucifixion":—

"The most exquisite instance of imaginative power occurs in an incident in the background of 'The Crucifixion.' I will not insult this marvellous picture by an effort at a verbal account of it. But Tintoret here, as in all other cases, penetrating into the root and deep places of his subject, despising all outward and bodily appearances of pain, and seeking for some means of expressing, not the rack of nerve or sinew, but the fainting of the deserted Son of God before His Eloi cry, and yet feeling himself utterly unequal to the expression of this by the countenance, has, on the one hand, filled his picture with such various and impetuous muscular exertion, that the body of the Crucified is, by comparison, in perfect repose, and, on the other, has cast the countenance altogether into shade. But the Agony is told by this, and by this only; that, though there yet remains a chasm of light on the mountain horizon where the earthquake darkness closes upon the day, the broad and sunlike glory about the head of the Redeemer has become wan, *and of the colour of ashes*.

"But the great painter felt he had something more to do yet. Not only that Agony of the Crucified, but the tumult of the people, that rage which invoked His blood upon them and their children. Not only the brutality of the soldier, the apathy of the Centurion, or any other merely instrumental cause of the Divine suffering, but the fury of His own people, the noise against Him of those for whom He died, were to be set before the eye of the understanding, if the power of the picture was to be complete. This rage, be it remembered, was one of disappointed pride; and the disappointment dated essentially from the time when, but five days before, the King of Zion came, and was received with hosannahs,



THE CRUCIFIXION.

From the Painting by Tintoretto.

From a Photograph by Anderson.

riding upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. To this time, then, it was necessary to direct the thoughts, for therein are found both the cause and the character, the excitement of, and the witness against, this madness of the people. In the shadow behind the cross a man, riding on an ass colt, looks back to the multitude, while he points with a rod to the Christ Crucified. The ass is feeding on the *remnants* of *withered palm-leaves*."

Once again a picture by the same painter—"The Last Judgment"—gives him an opportunity for one of the most impressive passages ever conceived:—

"By Tintoret only has this unimaginable event been grappled with in its Verity; not typically nor symbolically, but as they may see it who shall not sleep, but be changed. Only one traditional circumstance he has received with Dante and Michael Angelo, the Boat of the Condemned; but the impetuosity of his mind bursts out even in the adoption of his image; he has not stopped at the scowling ferryman of the one, nor at the sweeping blow and demon dragging of the other, but seized Hylas-like by the limbs, and tearing up the earth in his agony, the victim is dashed into his destruction: nor is it the sluggish Lethe, nor the fiery lake that bears the cursed vessel, but the oceans of the earth and the waters of the firmament gathered into one white, ghastly cataract; the river of the wrath of God, roaring down into the gulf where the world has melted with its fervent heat, choked with the ruin of nations, and the limbs of its corpses tossed

THE LAST JUDGMENT. From the Painting by Tintoretto.

From a Photograph by Anderson.

out of its whirling, like water-wheels. Bat-like, out of the holes and caverns and shadows of the earth, the bones gather and the clay heaps heave, rattling and adhering into half-kneaded anatomies, that crawl, and startle, and struggle up among the putrid weeds, with the clay clinging to their clotted hair, and their heavy eyes sealed by the earth darkness

yet, like his of old who went his way unseeing to the Siloam Pool; shaking off one by one the dreams of the prison-house, hardly hearing the clangour of the trumpets of the armies of God, blinded yet more, as they awake, by the white light of the new Heaven, until the great vortex of the four winds bears up their bodies to the judgment seat; the Firmament is all full of them, a very dust of human souls, that drifts, and floats, and falls in the interminable, inevitable light; the bright clouds are darkened with them as with thick snow, currents of atom life in the arteries of heaven, now soaring up slowly, and higher and higher still, till the eye and the thought can follow no farther, borne up, wingless, by their inward faith and by the angel powers invisible, now hurled in countless drifts of horror before the breath of their condemnation."

JASON. From Turner's "Liber Studiorum."

From a Photograph supplied by Mansell.

A point on which Ruskin laid much stress is the manner in which a great painter gets to the heart of his subject, and how his ideas are realized and made alive by the power of imagination. This is one of his examples—Turner's "Jason":—

"In Retsch's illustrations to Schiller's 'Kampf mit dem Drachen' we have an instance, miserably feeble indeed, but characteristic, and suited to our present purpose, of the detailing, finishing action of the fancy. The dragon is drawn from head to tail, vulture eyes, serpent teeth, forked tongue, fiery crest, armour, claws, and coils as grisly as may be; his den is drawn, and all the dead bones in it, and all the savage forest country about it far and wide; we have him, from the beginning of his career to the end, devouring, rampant, victorious over whole armies, gorged with death; we are present at all the preparations for his attack, see him receive his death-wound, and our anxieties are finally becalmed by seeing him lie peaceably dead on his back.

"All the time we have never got into the dragon heart, we have never once felt real pervading horror, nor sense of the creature's being; it is throughout nothing but an ugly composition of claw and scale. Now take up Turner's 'Jason' ('Liber Studiorum'), and observe how the imagination can concentrate all this, and infinitely more, into one moment. No far forest country, no secret path, nor cloven hills; nothing but a gleam of pale horizontal sky, that broods over pleasant places far away, and sends in, through the wild overgrowth of the thicket, a ray of broken daylight into the hopeless pit. No flaunting plumes nor brandished lances, but stern purpose in the turn of the crestless helmet, visible victory in the drawing back of the prepared right arm behind the steady point. No more claws,

nor teeth, nor manes, nor stinging tails. We have the dragon, like everything else, by the middle. We need see no more of him. All his horror is in that fearful, slow, griding upheaval of the single coil. Spark after spark of it, ring after ring, is sliding into the light, the slow glitter steals along him step by step, broader and broader, a lighting of funeral lamps one by one, quicker and quicker; a moment more, and he is out upon us, all crash and blaze, among those broken trunks—but he will be nothing then to what he is now."

But, after all, Ruskin was at his greatest as a poet—for a poet he was, although he did not write in verse, but in "that other harmony of prose." Let us end, as we began, with a description of a ship at sea. Few lovelier poems exist in the world than his elegy on the old *Téméraire*:—

"Of all pictures of subjects not visibly involving human pain, this is, I believe, the most pathetic that was ever painted. Those sails that strained so full bent into the battle—that broad bow that struck the surf aside, enlarging silently in steadfast haste, full front to the shot, resistless and without reply—those triple ports whose choirs of flame rang forth in their courses, into the fierce revenging monotone, which, when it died away, left no answering voice to rise any more upon the sea against the strength of England—those sides that were wet with the long runlets of English life-blood, like press-planks at vintage, gleaming goodly crimson down to the cast and clash of the washing foam—those pale masts that stayed themselves up against the war-ruin, shaking out their ensigns through the thunder, till sail and ensign drooped—steep in the death-stilled pause of Andalusian air, burning with its witness-cloud of human souls at rest—surely for these some sacred care might have been left in our thoughts—some quiet space amidst the lapse of English waters?

"Nay, not so. We have stern keepers to trust her glory to—the fire and the worm. Never more shall sunset lay golden robe on her, nor starlight tremble on the waves that part at her gliding. Perhaps, where the low gate opens to some cottage-garden, the tired traveller may ask, idly, why the moss grows so green on its rugged wood; and even the sailor's child may not answer, nor know, that the night-dew lies deep in the war-rents of the wood of the old *Téméraire*."

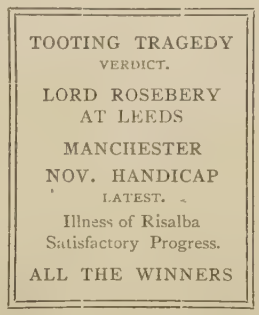
THE OLD "TEMERAIRE" TOWED TO HER LAST BERTH. From the Painting by Turner.
From a Photograph supplied by Mansell.

The Last Caprice.

By AUSTIN PHILIPS and PETER MACAIRE.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy, R.I.

SHE was safe; she was out of danger. The news of the operation and the ailment had paled before the last murder and the latest racing; was relegated to the penultimate line of the posters; gave London the news of her in lettering no longer monstrous, but modest, decent, restrained. And she, the idol of Covent Garden, the adored of opera-goers, lay, white, pillow-propped, and convalescent, on the great couch in that large, luxurious room.



Outside, the roar of traffic, far-off and faint; straw in the roadway, many-layered, lavishly-strewn. A night in late November, typical of winter London, death-dealing, maleficent, poisonous; making the strong faint-hearted; starkly, implacably seeking out and setting finger upon the heart and lungs of the weak. Within, romance and comfort, a wide hearth, a glowing wood-fed fire. Walls heavy with drapings; the silk-shaded lights that soothe. Floors soft to tread upon with their Eastern, heavy-lying rugs. The room itself boudoir, studio, library, study; each of these things and none of them, but to Kate Risalba meaning, most sweetly, Home.

The nurse, neat-gowned, white-capped, and freckled, rose from a corner of the settle. Then she took a slate from a tiny table and pushed it, with its string-hung pencil, into the patient's hand.

"Is there anything else you would like? I am going down to dinner. I shall not be more than half an hour at the most."

The soft, carefully-chosen pencil crumbled its quick reply:—

"I would like that book of Hichens on the bookcase by the fire. And the telegrams and letters that have come since lunch."

The nurse, searching, found the red-covered book and set it gently in the patient's lap. Then she lifted and carried to the couch-side the tiny escritoire.

"There; there is what you want. I shall be back in twenty-five minutes. Here"—the silken rope was laid across the soft pillow—"here is the bell. Ring for me, please, if you want me."

Kate Risalba—Risalba, as the world called her—sighed her thankfulness aloud. She loved and admired the bronze-haired little woman as efficient people love and admire their like. But she wanted loneliness, solitude, as only, sometimes, the artist can. And, these ten days—since the eve of the operation—she had been surrounded by alien folk.

It had come to her unexpectedly, the need of it; it had been sprung upon her without warning by the specialist to whom she had gone. "An operation immediately; a probable, an almost certain, cure. A month of singing-silence; a fortnight's respite for the speaking voice. Then all as well as ever; better, indeed, than you have been for many months. Shirk the operation, forego it—and in a year you sing no more. Choose, Madame Risalba—for you the decision—I can only give you advice!"

She had chosen, and the operation had succeeded; she was safe; she was out of the wood. Only deliberate carelessness—voice-suicide by the use of her vocal cords before the stern-lawed limit should expire—could harm her now. She knew—as no one else knew—how much there trembled in the scales. Riches against poverty; everything against nothing; life against living death. For she was the most extravagant woman in either hemisphere, and her solitary asset was her priceless, fugitive voice.

She had begun as an Academy student; in those days the most disciplined of pupils, less than any woman the slave of extravagance; the victim of caprice. Early-orphaned, scarcely-relationed, grit, sheer grit, nothing but that could have hacked a way through disappointments and obstacles, handicaps and misfortunes, made trebly difficult by a

poverty sordid, unpicturesque. A garret in Gower Street; a pittance from uncles incredulous of her staying-power and gift. A physique magnificent, unparalleled. Eight years of foregoing, of self-denial, of the fanatical sacrifices that only women can make. Rebuffs, reverses; a gradual gaining; a getting together of money; the *début* upon the grand opera stage. The part Mimi; the opera Puccini's "Bohème." Then triumph—real triumph—the breath of popular fame. A tour of continent and hemisphere; a conquering of the world. A return to Covent Garden; an apotheosis, a setting amongst the goddesses of song. "The English Nightingale," they called her; this Englishwoman who redeemed from the reproach of "unmusical" the admiring British race. And, marvellously, she had kept her head; had stayed unspoiled of fame—till, suddenly, the head was turned and her wild extravagance set royally as she earned. She had this house in Mayfair, a Perthshire castle, a steam yacht at Southampton; and Italy's tiniest, most southern islet was her own. She was reckless in all things save in one. That thing was love. She, everywhere more fierce, more fanatical than her kind, had sacrificed love

"THE SOFT, CAREFULLY-CHOSEN PENCIL CRUMBLED ITS QUICK REPLY."

all the world a-talk. She indulged the least mad impulse, gratified every folly and whim; drew cheques of colossal magnitude upon her banking account of earning capacity and health. She worked hard as ever, was as industrious as in her student's hours. Yet she knew everyone, went everywhere, did everything, entertained wastefully, spent as to art. At the hour of her first great triumph Love had threatened his spell.

She knew herself to the heart's core; and of herself she was afraid. She had loved deeply; she had had the thought of marriage, but saw plainly all that marriage must mean. It meant, for her, retirement, the relinquishing of popularity

and fame. By halves she could do nothing; it had never been her way. She could not serve two masters; she must give herself to her work or to her husband with all her heart and soul. Fame and popularity seemed her life's blood. She retained them; she prepared to send love away. She achieved this as she achieved all things which had been her desire. Save, only, one. That thing, forgetfulness.

Now quickly, determinedly, she took from the escritoire the high-heaped telegrams and letters, set the telegrams aside for a moment, and opened the letters first. When letters and envelopes were tossed floorwards, the buff-covered missives had their turn. She opened them idly, esteeming them little, saying to herself, in the act of it, "Real friends write, not wire!"

Five, ten, twenty of them, covers alike and contents, crumpled, flat-lying, crinkled, lay anyhow before her, patching the silken coverlet with orange and grey. Another cover torn open; one more unfolded page. A reading, swift and careless; a gasp, an exclamation, a re-reading; a cry of terror, a sitting bolt upright; an effort immense and fruitless to read, a third time, words that leaped towards her, danced backward, then, in a sea of terror, seemed to swim away. She reeled; she stood vertiginous; breathless, dizzy, and sick. The flimsy, outstretched paper crackled in its passage through the air. And now the words that had danced backward, that had fled upon terror's tide, seemed, as it were, flung forward, shouting their message of death:—

"*Mr. Corrie Stuart fatally wounded in motor accident. He demands you. He is sinking fast.—Nurse Garnett, Les Lunes, St. Ives.*"

And of a sudden the artist in her died—or was drugged to death's semblance. The woman in her was re-born, made new. Fame? Fame was not. Wealth? Wealth was forgotten. Recognition, popularity! Did such things exist? For eight years she had crushed Love back to her heart's remotest wall. Expelled him? Never! And now she could hold him there no longer; the hour of his revenge was at hand.

"The bell! The bell! Where is it?" and her voice, throaty, strange-sounding, husked to her frightened ears. She moved, she twisted, she swung this way and that, seeking with mad haste what lay before her eyes. "There; ah, there!" She snatched at it, set finger on the ivory knob of it, carried it, still down-pressing it, in her passage across the room; then turned and came, like a caged animal, across the thick, soft floor. Suddenly she made doorwards, stumbled over her wrapper, went on her knees, rose up again, went forward and came to the rope's full limit, feeling the wrench at wrist and shoulder as it jerked itself from her clasp. The door was opened, the landing and its banisters were reached.

"Madge! Madge! Where are you? Madge! Oh, Madge!"

There was the sound of a door flung open, the exchange of short, sharp sentences, the crackle of stiff-starched uniform, the hiss and swish of skirts. The nurse was first upon the staircase; the companion was close behind. Looking up, as they hurried, they saw, gazing down on them, a woman whose one hand gripped the rail before her, whose other hand flourished a piece of paper; whose voice, thick and husky, gasped half-inaudible words.

"What on earth's the matter? What are you doing? Madame—Madame Risalba, how *dare* you leave your couch!"

The nurse, on the landing, caught her patient's arm and pulled her quickly from the banisters, turning her towards the open door. But the *diva*, big, blonde, imperious, swung round excitedly, roughly, pushing the little woman away.

"Madge—read—read this." The grey flimsy was thrust into an outstretched hand. "Woman!"—the dramatic, unforgettable habit of the theatre put stage words upon the *diva's* angry lips—"woman, let me go—let me go, I say! I'll do as I please, I tell you! Leave me alone—*will* you leave me alone?"

There was another effort from the nurse, a repulse from Kate Risalba; one more outburst, an appeal to the companion, a sharp, indignant reproach. "Help me, Miss Herbert; oh, help me! How *can* you stand there? Do something. Help me to get her back."

But Madge Herbert, black-gowned and tall, fellow-student and failure, whom the *diva* had pulled from poverty, had made friend and confidante; who, the weaker spirit, repaid the kindness with a passionate fondness for the stronger, could—herself aghast—offer no assistance to the nurse. She knew what Kate Risalba had suffered, how much she had endured. And she knew, too, all that this terrible message must mean. And all her being leaped in sympathy with her friend's great grief. Her voice throbbed, her hands went quickly out.

"Corrie Stuart—dying!"

"Yes; he—he may be——!"

"MADGE! MADGE! WHERE ARE YOU?"

"Oh-h-h! What are you—— Shall I go to him—take a message? Shall I——?"

"No!"

"Madame—Madame Risalba! For God's sake—your voice——"

"Silence, I tell you! Silence! Let me think."

The nurse gasped, half spoke a further protest, saw the folly of it—and was dumb. What her patient did was madness; what

opposition might goad her to do would be worse. So the little woman stayed silent, hoping against fear. Madge Herbert, too, was speechless. The *diva*, gripping the hand-rail, stared down the staircase well. And, standing there, she made decision; chose to gratify one more—the last—caprice. It was voice-suicide, and she knew it; it was the death of recognition, the end of popularity, the loss of name and fame. It was magnificent; it was colossal; it was—poverty. It was, also, madness—and the deed of a woman who loved.

"I am going to him. Send Terry to me. Tell her to pack a bag. Be quick—be quick!" And she turned and went into the room.

The nurse, hurrying after her, found the companion at her side. She stayed in the doorway; caught at Madge Herbert, asking her for the truth.

"Going! Where is she going?" Madge Herbert's answer sent her white to the lips.

"She is going to St. Ives, to see someone who—who——"

"But it's the end—the end of everything. She will never sing again! Can't you turn her; can't you move her?"

"I will try, nurse. But you must expect—nothing. She will do—just as her heart dictates."

It would be useless. Madge Herbert knew more than the nurse knew; had had trust and confidence, was aware of how Kate Risalba had loved and suffered secretly, was conscious of her illimitable, despair-begotten capriciousness, was sure of what, now, her friend was going to do. For the gratification of a whim, a fortune—that had ever been her way. For the gratification of her heart's desire, the fleeting indulgence of a life's passion, for the final sight of, an hour with, a first, a last kiss from, the man she had loved—and had lost for ambition—the *diva* would have sacrificed fortunes innumerable—was, in fact, going to throw away her present and to ruin her future.

Yet the companion, knowing it useless, put up, quickly, tactfully, one final fight for her friend, in whose fortunes her own fortunes were bound up.

"Kate!" Madge Herbert touched, gently, the *diva's* shoulder as she spoke.

"Yes."

"Are you—are you going?"

"Yes."

"Is it—is it worth it?"

"*I* think so."

"But, Kate"—there was one last effort, made feebly, made with the certainty that the reiteration was useless—"Kate—you know what it means to you—and the—the future. Is it—I hate to say it—is it *worth* it—is it, after all, *wise?*"

"*Wise!*" The *diva's* voice, for all its huskiness, was magnificent with disdain. "*Wise?* Who cares for wisdom? It is *right!* I must pay my debt!"

Madge Herbert drew back from her and glanced meaningly at the nurse. The nurse looked coldly back, not—since she loved the *diva*—less wrung than those other women, but because, long trained to it, she had learned to hide emotion, to school herself to be calm. And she was thinking, seeking, struggling to find some way to keep her patient from the journey, to build some commonsense barrier that would withstand the onset of caprice.

"The nine-fifty from Paddington. See Harker. Tell him to have the brougham ready at a quarter past. Then come and help me. Come to my room!"

Kate Risalba swept doorwards; Madge Herbert, following behind, turned as she went and gave to the nurse a shrug of sympathy, a consolatory glance. The companion had made her effort; the appeal, the protest had failed. Now, in her great loyalty, it was her task—it seemed to her her duty—though against her own interests—to aid, to help her friend. And the nurse, despairing, discomfited, was left in the room alone. There strategy came to her rescue, conquering the hospital-bred awe of great physicians, overcoming etiquette, driving her to the initiative that should save the *diva* from herself. She crossed the room and caught up a receiver from its rest.

"Halloa, there! Nine double O one Mayfair. Yes, nine double O one." She stood eager and impatient, pressing, in her anxiousness, the ear-piece hard against her head.

"Is that nine double O one Mayfair? Dr. Parris, is he in? Oh, thank you. Yes, it is very, very important. Ah, is that Dr. Parris? I'm Nurse Sargent—at Madame Risalba's house. Relapse? No, *worse*. She's had a telegram. Someone's ill—dying—she's going to him—going to St. Ives. What, stop her? Oh, I've tried my hardest. I can do nothing—nothing at all. What, madness? Of course it's madness. What—what—you'll come to her—now? Oh, thank God, doctor, thank God! But make haste—make haste—or you'll be too late. What, keep her—delay her—don't let her get out into the fog? All right, I'll try, doctor, only

make haste. She's unmanageable—absolutely. Come soon, or it will be too late!"

The receiver clicked back upon its two bright-polished forks. Nurse Sargent, restless and eager, paced the thick-rugged floor. Was there time, she asked herself—was there time for him to come—to save?

The clock struck nine; the minute-hand went forward; but there was no doctor, no Madame Risalba; no brougham, as yet, before the house. Five past the hour, ten past. The nurse flung open the door, lest her patient should cross the landing and descend the stairs unheard. She ran to the window and pulled aside the curtains; peering into the fog, she saw a motor cross the spread-out straw, but it was the *diva's* brougham, not the doctor's cab. The quarter; sixteen minutes; seventeen; then sounds upon the stairs. They were outside, the *diva* and Madge Herbert; Terry, the maid, as well; the *diva*, fur-muffled and fur-cloaked. And they were going down!

"Madame Risalba"—the nurse dashed on to the landing, between patient and stairs—"if you *must* go, wrap up warm enough; let me get you some food."

She was taken by the waist; a strong arm went round her; she was kissed upon both her cheeks, was swung swiftly, bodily out of Kate Risalba's imperious way. "I'm sorry—sorry if I was rude to you—forgive me, nurse, *please*. Tell Dr. Parris that you did your best to keep me back. Tell him I'll write to him—he knows me—he knows I do as I please. Madge, dearest, stay and look after nurse." And the *diva* was gone, her maid with her; the front door was opened, admitting the poisonous fog. Then it closed again, following upon the faint, sharp bang of the brougham's door. The nurse, running back to the window, saw the car traverse the straw, watched the fog swallow it up. Then, turning, she found Madge Herbert at her side.

"Why, oh, *why* didn't you help me?" came her quick, despairing cry.

"I did help you. I did all I *could* do. It was useless. She just had to go."

"Why?"

"She loved him."

"But it's the end of her——"

Madge Herbert stood silent a moment, regarding the other with sad and questioning eyes. And then: "Have you ever really loved, nurse?" she wonderingly asked.

"No; I don't think so; except, of course, my work."

"Ah, then, you don't understand. She has loved him always—since her student days. Life would be impossible for her afterwards if she did not go to him now."

The nurse answered nothing, but went back to the window once more and stood there, watching, praying for the cab that might yet be in time to turn and catch Kate Risalba upon the platform itself. But it was ten—two minutes past ten—before a taxi, fog-burrowing, fiercely hooting, pulled up before the house. As the doctor ran up the steps Nurse Sargent reached the hall. She had the door open, and gave him the hopeless truth.

"She is gone, doctor. Her train left Paddington more than ten minutes ago."

The doctor looked at her; looked, too, at Madge Herbert, who had joined them in the hall.

"You did your best," he answered. "I'm sure of it. Even if I had got here earlier I doubt whether I could have kept her back. But—but she will be lucky if she keeps her speaking voice—she will never sing again!"

She—the woman he spoke of—was on London's outskirts now. The train dashed westwards, free of suburb and fog. Slough, Burnham, Taplow, Maidenhead, Reading, and beyond; on, on, towards the Cornish West. In her haste it had been the triumph of instinct; now that her voyaging compelled inactiveness it was the turn, the triumph, of thought. She was re-living her adolescence; was seeing, clear and vivid, her early, struggling life. But most one picture came to her—an hour, an episode of her dear and student days.

A girl was singing—singing about clouds and thunder and storm. Then silence—sudden silence; and upon that a clamorous applause—applause which died and rose again in young and excited shouts; calls for the student-composer of the student's just-sung song. A mere boy appearing, staying one nervous second at the head of the small flight of stairs beside the platform; the girl, now at the stairs' foot, clapping wildly; and the whole audience, professors, students, relations, loudly approving the pair. The boy was Corrie Stuart, and the girl—— The *diva* heard now the unforgotten melody, wistful, in call urgent, in echo haunting, insistent.

This picture again, and many times. Then a drifting into other scenes: the whole gamut of a student friendship; the same fight for Academy honours; a mutual rejoicing in distinctions, prizes won. Then, later, common checks; the same march forward; the all but beaching in the same backwater; success to both of them, almost at the self-same hour. And in that hour the knowledge

which the struggle had hid from them: the dawning of the truth, the revelation of their love. To the man it had meant the fulfilling of life, the completion of all things, a perfecting of his art, the utterest, most final realization of beauty itself. To the woman it had meant the sacrifice of all which she had sacrificed herself to achieve. For she could not serve love and music, and she could not do things by halves. She suffered incredibly; she worked and, most desperately, played. His sufferings? She knew nothing of them, save that he *did* suffer. She only knew that she loved him, that he both understood her and forgave. He lived little in London; lived there only when he must. It had, for him, irrevocably lost its charm. He worked in the country, at his house on the cliff-top at St. Ives.

The train rushed forward, carrying Kate Risalba to the ancient fishing village, taking her to the bedside of the man she loved, had always loved—and would love to the last hour of her ruined, voice-lost life. The future, with its emptiness, was nothing to her; the past, with its crowded triumphs, its worthless, costly pleasures, meant, indeed, still less. Nothing mattered, nothing counted—life was empty of all things but regret. She might be in time to ask forgiveness, and, receiving it, to draw comfort, succour, and such stay as should help her to endure. Her sacrifice—immense, colossal, beyond the power of lesser souls to make? She thought little of it—nothing. She was a great woman who loved greatly, as a great artist must, and who made reparation as titanically as she had erred. She would "go out," disappear, become a name's shadow; she, the one

"SHE WILL NEVER SING AGAIN!"

supreme—pre-eminently supreme—English songstress of her day. And her laurels, self-abandoned, would fall to Marecini, the Italian woman who hated and was jealous of her; who, hitherto outdistanced, would step where she had stood. "I shall be *fêted* when you are forgotten," the foreigner had cried one furious afternoon when each had sung in a great charity *matinée* and the Englishwoman had been the more acclaimed of the pair.

On—on; the lights of sleeping Bristol, the stop and start at Bridgwater and Taunton; at Exeter a long nine minutes' stay. Then Newton Abbot; the dash for Plymouth; the crossing of the Tamar, the swift passage into Cornwall's heart. Now and then the maid's entrance—"Can I do anything, madame? Is there anything madame would wish done?" Always a "Nothing, Terry!" a shiver of relief at being alone again; a growing icy numbness, in spite of furs and rugs. And as the train left Truro, rumbling into the coming dawn, a recollection, a snatching from an inner pocket of the crushed-up scrap of flimsiness which had brought her, ruined, to the West. She unfolded it and spread it open. Not less now than then it shouted its terrible news:—

"*Mr. Corrie Stuart fatally wounded in motor accident. He demands you. He is sinking fast.—Nurse Garnett, Les Lunes, St. Ives.*"

"Wounded" — not "injured," but "wounded"; the word was horrible, picturing; sending her imagination galloping, making her visualize the appalling worst. She beheld him pale and bandaged; grey-handed, growing waxen-white. He was dying—dead. She had no speech with him; there were no words; no whispered forgiveness; no kiss of desperate clinging which should enable her, henceforward, to endure. He was dead—dead; and—as the certainty assumed her—sending her heart cold with a coldness to which her body's numbness was as fever's heat—the train slackened, ran into, and pulled up at St. Erth.

"We change here, madame." The maid was beside her, gathering up wraps and rugs. Kate Risalba got out of the carriage and into another one in a dream. A wait of eight minutes, then fifteen minutes' journeying beside the Cornish sea. The sun came through and the haze from the sea was softened away, and full daylight, fierce and pitiless, fell upon the *diva's* haggard face. Wonderfully, heroically, she forced herself into calmness, for she would not go weeping into the death chamber, or, if he still lived, be otherwise than helpful and calm. Alone she was feeble, despairing. Before him she would be strong and brave. So she told herself; such, then, she forced herself to be.

St. Ives!

As she got out she turned to her maid a moment and pointed to an hotel which stood above the station on the cliff.

"Up there; they will give you breakfast; get me a room—and wait."

Then she turned towards the station gate.

"Les Lunes—where is Les Lunes?" she asked.

"Up there, madame. Up on the hill." The porter pointed to a bungalow which looked seawards from the cliff.

"Thank you." She hesitated; a question—*the* question—trembled upon her lips; then died, unasked, fear-killed. And she was gone—up the steps, up the hill, fast-walking, yet stately in her haste. The man stared after her, curious, as his kind; wondering who she was, this woman with the husky voice and queenly presence who seemed in such trouble and stress.

She came to the cliff-top; she was now before the white-walled, red-roofed house. As she stood, motionless, before the wooden gates, a dead, torpid feeling was upon her, numbing, enshackling her limbs. She made a vast effort, recovered herself, and opened the gate. There were steps, a short approach, a veranda round the house. Windows faced her, innocent of down-drawn blinds. He was—he was still alive!

Her hand went upwards, then stopped, for she hesitated to set finger upon the disturbing bell. How to attract attention—how not to give noise or shock? The question was answered for her as she stayed.

To the right of her a window, latched and latticed, opened at a hand-touch; a hand, just seen, fixed the shining, hole-drilled bar of brass upon the pin in the white wood frame; a face, dark, clean-shaven, sensitive, showed for a second and was gone. Then a humming of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, a humming of the melody, dolorous and sweet; the sound of a keyboard's cover lifted and set back; the careless striking of preliminary notes.

"Jim! Jim!"

In the room a cry, carrying to the woman on the veranda that certainty which the hand, the face, the humming, had failed to make complete; the crash of a music-stool finding the wood-blocked floor; footsteps rushing windowwards; a face thrust out, drawn back. Outside the window no one—but a

furious knocking at the front door. And then—and then——

"Jim!"—the voice husked out its great emotion; "Jim! But the accident—the wire——!"

There, in the music-room, Corrie Stuart stared at her, looking down on her from his great height; big with the bigness of which his work was the revelation; the first of

"THE MAN WAS READING THE MESSAGE, RE-READING IT, KNITTING OVER IT PUZZLED BROWS."

English composers; his pride to look not musician, but man.

"Wire — accident! I don't — I don't understand."

"What does it mean? Why—why did you send for me?"

"Send for you, Kate? *I* send for *you!*"

The unmeant reproach fell harmless, almost unheard. Kate Risalba was fumbling desperately in her small, gold-crested bag. She found and thrust the flimsy at him; he took it, read it with eyes incredulous, amazed.

"'Fatally wounded in motor accident—demands you—sinking fast—Nurse Garnett.' I know no one of that name."

"You know no one?"

"No; I"—he forgot now the surprise of it, remembered only that she had been operated upon, heard her voice was choked and thick—"oh, my God; they've played on your large-heartedness—they've tricked you into coming—so as to ruin you—to take away your voice. An enemy has done this."

"An enemy?"

"Yes." The man was reading the message, re-reading it, knitting over it puzzled brows. "'Fatally wounded—motor accident—demands you.' Who—who can it be?"

"It doesn't matter, Jim—you're safe—that's all—all that really counts!"

Corrie Stuart scarcely heard her; he was repeating the text of the telegram, wondering, searching in vain. Then, suddenly, there came two gestures; one of dull helplessness, the other of quick surprise. And a third—of anger, indignation, rage.

"We shall never—yes—yes—we shall—heavens, I see it all. It is, it is, it *is!*"

"Is what, Jim? Who is it—who is it? What do you mean?"

"It's Marecini!"

"What? Impossible!"

"It isn't impossible; it's true. She's done it. It's her doing—she-devil that she is!"

"But, Jim——"

"Look!" His forefinger, pressed on the flimsy, pointed to the betraying words. "'Fatally wounded'—'wounded'—*that* gives it away. An English person would write 'injured'; an Italian would think of *ferito*—would use 'wounded' instead. The cat! The—the devil-cat! Curse her!"

"But, Jim—it's only surmise. You don't *know*——"

"I do know, Kate. I *do* know. And look here—look here, again. 'He demands you.' We—English people—would never say that. We should write 'asks for you,' 'wants you'—anything but 'demands.' And, besides, that isn't all. I remember now. Her maid was here in St. Ives yesterday—that woman whom she takes with her everywhere. She was at the station. She pretended not to see me, but her thick veil made me stare, and I saw then who it was. It was she—it must have been she—who handed the telegram in. Yes; a jealous woman will do anything—anything in the world!"

"Well, Jim"—and Kate Risalba spoke almost listlessly—"if it *was* Marecini it doesn't much matter—nothing much matters now."

"Doesn't matter!" He stared at her; catching her hands, he held them and gasped his anxiety out. "But your voice, Kate. You must see a doctor—you must rest. I'll go to——"

She took a step forward, in her speech unconsciously dramatic, like the great artist that she was.

"Stay; it is useless. I shall never sing again."

"Never sing——"

"No." She smiled at him whitely. "No; I knew that——"

"Knew it!"

"Yes."

"When?"

"When I started."

"And you came to me—you came!"

"Yes!"

"But—Kate, it was madness. How could you?"

She smiled at him, beautifully, simply. "I had to come," she replied.

"Why?"

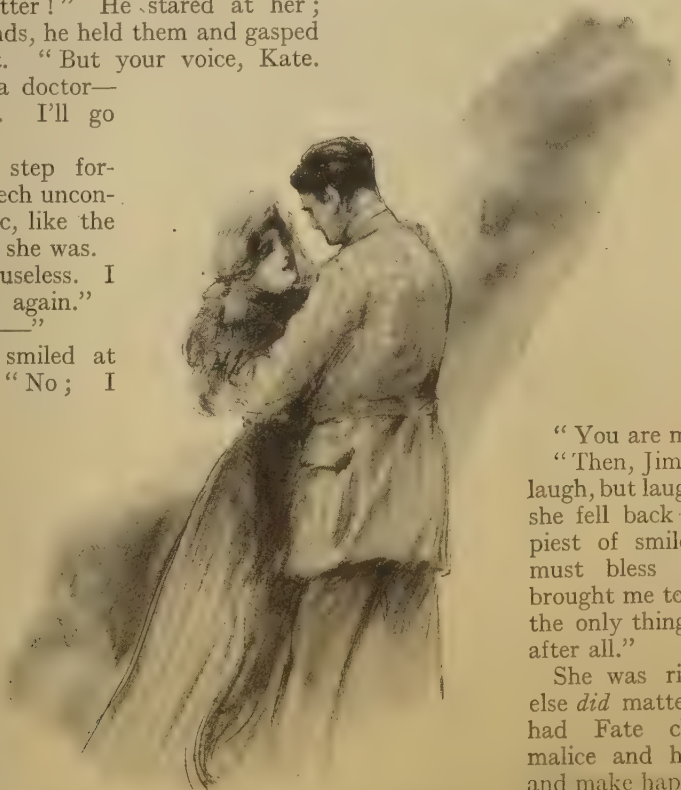
"Because I loved you. I had made you miserable. I wanted to make you happy—I wanted—to pay my debt."

"Kate—Kate!" Corrie Stuart took one step towards her and held her tight and close in his arms. And in that moment the artist in her died for ever; the woman in her leaped to life—to live.

"Then you—you still love me?" she asked, presently, in her poor and husky voice.

"I adore you! You know it; you have always known."

"Yes; but I treated you so badly. And now—now that I've lost everything—now that I'm nobody——"



"CORRIE STUART TOOK ONE STEP TOWARDS HER AND HELD HER TIGHT AND CLOSE IN HIS ARMS."

"You are mine."

"Then, Jim"—she tried to laugh, but laughter failed her; she fell back upon the happiest of smiles. "Jim, we must bless Marecini, who brought me to you. That is the only thing that matters, after all."

She was right. Nothing else *did* matter. Once more had Fate chosen human malice and hatred to unite and make happy those whom Destiny had decreed should be joined.

Who Are the Ten Greatest Men Now Alive?

A Symposium of Representative Opinions.

THE term "greatness" implies a certain rare quality which lifts a man up on a pedestal and sets him above and apart from the run of mankind. "Genius," perhaps, would better express this quality; but whatever term is used it implies power by reason of singular and commanding gifts. Thus, Napoleon, Wellington, Bismarck, Peel, Gladstone, Macaulay, Lincoln, Gambetta, Moltke, Thackeray, Dickens, Cavour, and Tennyson were such men of mark. They would probably figure in most contemporary lists of the world's ten greatest men. So would Cecil Rhodes, Pasteur, and Tolstoi. You could not have compiled a muster roll of the ten most eminent men and leave those names out.

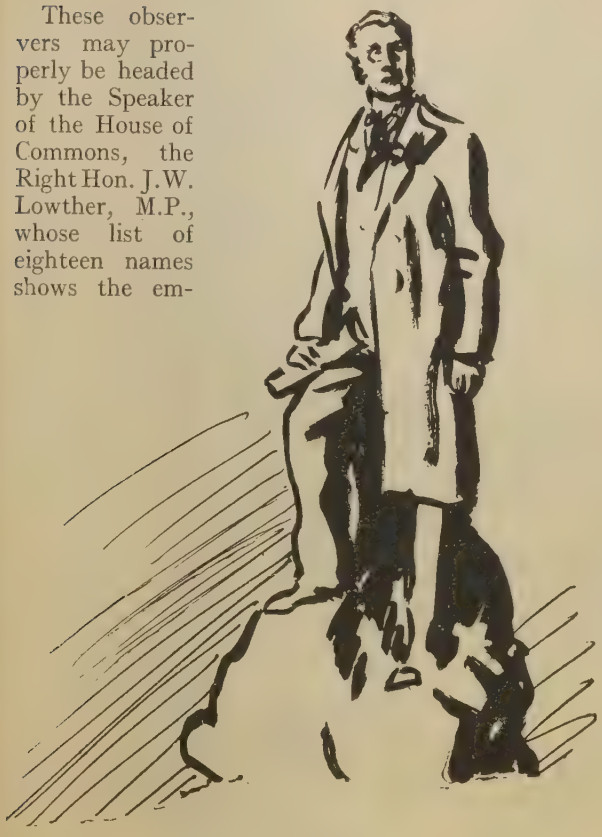
THOMAS A. EDISON.

Who, then, are the ten greatest men in the world to-day? Who, judged by these standards, and these standards alone, ought to be included? The task is not an easy one, but it can be achieved. With the first five, indeed, it is comparatively easy. Most Anglo-Saxons will agree that Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, Thomas Edison, and Theodore Roosevelt should not be excluded.

But will a Frenchman or a German or a Russian also admit their claims? It is the more difficult because there do not seem to be any mighty names in the present day in statecraft, literature, art, and music comparable to the mighty names of the past. Who is the twentieth-century equivalent to Bismarck, Turner, Wagner, Beethoven, Victor Hugo, Shelley, Byron, or Balzac? France has several great names in literature—François Coppée, Rostand, Loti, and Anatole France. She has Rodin and Bonnat in art. But has she any statesman the peer, say, of Gambetta or of Thiers? The fame of what German is co-extensive with civilization? Is there any besides William II.? Haeckel, perhaps, and Ehrlich. Has Russia any great genius to replace Tolstoi? Well, there is Metchnikoff. Austria has Richard Strauss; Italy has Puccini, d'Annunzio, and Ferrero. As for America, besides Mr. Edison and Mr. Roosevelt, there are several commanding figures in finance and of international renown. There are, too, Wilbur Wright and J. S. Sargent. And so on.

In order, then, to arrive at some decision, not, it may be, permanent, or one that will stand the test of posterity, but not the less significant on that account—perhaps even more valuable as reflecting contemporary judgments—the Editor of THE STRAND has asked a number of eminent observers in various departments of effort to compile a list of the ten who, in their opinion, deserve this tremendous honour — the ten men who are the most certain of statues after their death.

These observers may properly be headed by the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Right Hon. J.W. Lowther, M.P., whose list of eighteen names shows the em-



JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

barrassment under which most of the list-makers labour:—

Lord Lister.	Emperor William II.
Prof. Elie Metchnikoff.	Thomas A. Edison.
Lord Kitchener.	Richard Strauss.
Lord Rosebery.	Ernest Haeckel.
Joseph Chamberlain.	Thomas Hardy.
Theodore Roosevelt.	Porfirio Diaz.
Lord Roberts.	John S. Sargent, R.A.
G. Marconi.	Lord Rayleigh.
Rudyard Kipling.	Emperor of Austria.

If he had further to abbreviate this list the First Commoner of England would, we have reason to believe, sacrifice the names of Francis Joseph, Diaz, Sargent, and Rayleigh. It is still four too long. Can it be possible that the Emperor William, Kitchener, Chamberlain, and Hardy would have to go?

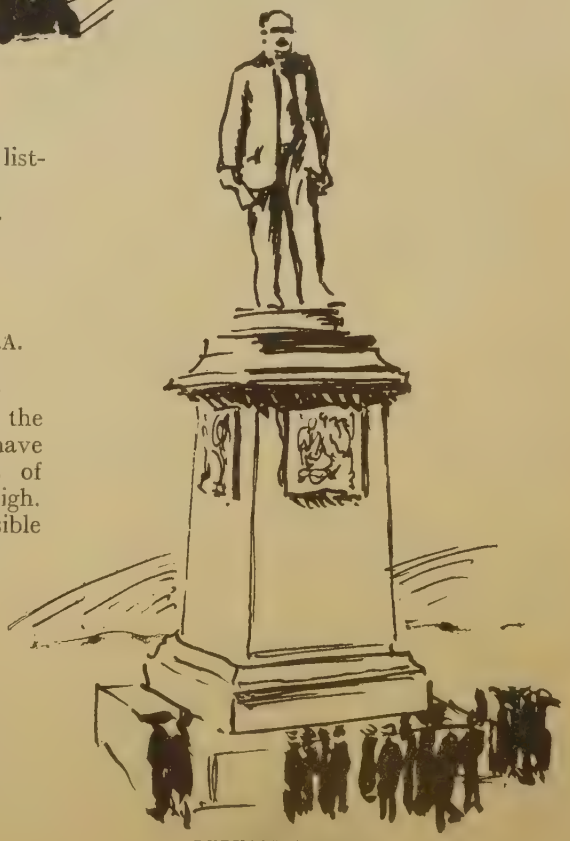
The next list is that of a very experienced observer of men, Sir Frederick Milner, Bart. It runs thus:—

Joseph Chamberlain.	Theodore Roosevelt
Lord Kitchener.	Louis Botha.
Lord Roberts.	Lord Rosebery.
Lord Lister.	Thomas A. Edison.
Rudyard Kipling.	William II.

A distinguished member of the French Academy, M. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, thinks that France is too scantily represented on the lists drawn up by Englishmen. He writes as follows:—

"It is an extremely delicate matter to say who or what is a great man, and much more to say if such and such a living personage can be classed amongst the elect whose names posterity three or four generations hence—say about the end of the twentieth century—will regard with a veritable admiration. I much fear that in the chief list you send me, containing twenty-one different names, there are not fifteen who will retain public attention and favour at the end of this century.

"As to that which concerns France, I see in the list but a single writer (Anatole France) as her representative; and I will not conceal from you that this name is not the one I myself would have chosen. Our greatest



RUDYARD KIPLING.

living writer is incontestably Loti, for works he has produced during the past thirty years.

"Permit me to inquire why your lists are restricted to novelists, politicians, soldiers, and savants? These personages are very far from representing all human activity and all human triumphs. For example, there is aviation and the aviators, who carry progress higher than all the politicians or romancers, or even savants. These are the true heroes, who have achieved a work of far greater originality than the twenty-one distinguished persons of whom a list has been made, and they will live longer in the memory of mankind."

LORD LISTER.

The ten of another distinguished Frenchman, M. Paul Deschanel, President of the Senate, consists of the following names:—

Emperor William II.	Ehrlich.
Edison.	Rostand.
Togo.	Wilbur Wright.
Roosevelt	Rosebery.
Clemenceau	Bonnat.

Now, the foregoing strikingly demonstrates the possibility of constructing a list of the ten greatest men in the world with only a single Englishman in it—and that Englishman half a Scotchman! Indeed, the greatest danger is parochialism; the greatest difficulty is to keep our countrymen out.

As Mr. Andrew Lang writes, after also studying the Speaker's list and another comprising twenty-one names:—

"I cannot presume to foretell who will be remembered out of all this crowd, and would prefer to back the field against the twenty-one! As an archæologist Sir Arthur Evans will not be forgotten—by archæologists, British and foreign. Ten British out of twenty-one of the world seems an impossible shot!"

That is the trouble; immortality is conferred by cliques—cliques of artists, scientists, philosophers. By them and their successors the work of an original genius is never forgotten. But we have here to concern ourselves with a wider measure of fame.

"The lists," writes Sir Charles Cameron, Bart., a veteran Parliamentarian and spectator of the world's affairs, "seem to me rather parochial. No one will dispute Lord Lister's right to a foremost place as a benefactor of humanity, or Metchnikoff's as a scientist, and if there were room for a third in the category I would suggest Ehrlich, the discoverer of antidiphtheritic serum and the wonder-working '606,' or Major Donald Ross, who has reduced the extinction of malaria to a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence.

"As to our generals, the two named are doubtless very distinguished men, and Lord Roberts's achievement in Afghanistan will always rank high in military annals; but Lord Kitchener has not so far had any opportunity of action which could place him on a par with the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese army in the Russo-Japanese War (Oyama). Nor, I think, has the Emperor of Japan a better claim to distinction than Admiral Togo.

"As to world politics, I can conceive no worse selection of British representatives than Lord Rosebery and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who neither of them has accomplished any epoch-marking reform; while Mr. Asquith's name will live in history in connection with his work on the House of Lords. Pierpont Morgan is doubtless a celebrated financier, but as a millionaire he is eclipsed by Rockefeller, and as a benefactor to his kind by Andrew Carnegie, who has lavished his millions on the institution of free libraries, the promotion of education, and the propaganda of peace. I agree with you that the brothers Wright have a valid claim as the pioneers of practical aviation, and that room

LORD ROBERTS.

might easily be found for their names by the excision of some of the more obviously second or third-class names in the chief list. In conclusion, might I put in a good word for General Booth and President Taft, the initiator of the thoroughgoing Arbitration Treaties as a substitute for war?"

More and more will this task of selection be seen to be an affair of perspective and—knowledge. One must learn to appraise genius at its right value, and not because of a name that appears oftenest in the newspapers.

"Away with your so-called great men!" cries in effect Mr. Harold Begbie, who goes on to propose what he calls a "utilitarian ten" as follows:—

Lord Lister	J. G. Frazer (author of "The Golden Bough").
Theodore Roosevelt.	Sir John Hewett.
D. Lloyd George.	Lord Kinnaird.
Sir John Kirk.	Sir Oliver Lodge.
General Booth.	
Lord Cromer.	

Yet even Mr. Begbie seems to know nothing about the utilitarianism and humanitarianism of Metchnikoff, Ehrlich, and Sir Donald Ross, whose claims are advanced in Sir Charles Cameron's list.

"The greatest benefactors of the race," he adds, "are surely the nameless men who bring into existence the vast irrigation works of India, lay railways across mountains, bring the wilderness into cultivation, and administer justice among the ignorant and cruel. Then there are the surgeons and doctors of our hospitals, the district nurses, the Barnardo officials, etc., all heroic people. I rather think Sandow has done more for contemporary morals than most of the men named, *i.e.*, in the Speaker's list." All of which may be true, but hardly disposes of the question of who are the ten greatest men in the world.

"I must rather demur to some of the selections," writes a distinguished politician and former member of Mr. Balfour's Cabinet, who prefers to withhold his name. "Lord Kitchener has never won a battle of the slightest consequence except against black men with inferior arms. Can Marconi be included when Sir Oliver Lodge, the real inventor of wireless, is omitted? Ought not the Japanese Commander-in-Chief be preferred to the Emperor of Japan, and certainly to Admiral Togo, who had a contemptible fleet to fight, while the Russian soldiers were always formidable? Mr. Kipling has a great but very irregular genius — has not John Morley

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

a claim? Can Lord Rosebery point to anything done or any opinion permanently influenced by his excellent speeches—never pushed home?"

Now we come to another kind of observer. Two new names appear in the list of Mr. Will Crooks, M.P.:—

Sir Edward Grey.	Edison.
Prince Bülow.	Roosevelt.
Louis Botha.	Metchnikoff.
Lord Lister.	Joseph Chamberlain.
Lord Roberts.	Kipling.

Or we may consider the list of the ten greatest men, as they appear to a successful novelist like Mr. Charles Garvice:—

Elie Metchnikoff.	Edison.
Kitchener.	Marconi.
Chamberlain.	Kipling.
Roosevelt.	William II.
Roberts.	Hardy.

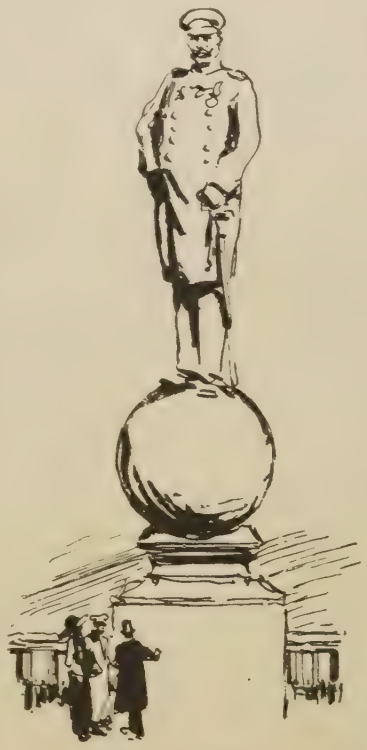
That is to say, five Englishmen out of the ten. Is that too extravagant? "An impossible shot," as Mr. Andrew Lang termed it.

Well, there is Mr. W. J. Locke, who would delete Metchnikoff, Kitchener, and William II. and substitute therefor—

J. S. Sargent.
Edmond Rostand.
Auguste Rodin.

In other words, one's choice lies in the direction of one's sympathies. To many Robert Louis Stevenson was a far greater man than William Ewart Gladstone. Who would have suspected Rembrandt to have been a greater man than the Duke of Alva?

"I am entirely of the opinion," writes Mr. Max Pemberton, "that Maeterlinck should be included in such a list, though I would not add the name of Rostand, greatly as I admire 'Cyrano.' I am also cordially of the opinion that Thomas Hardy should appear in such a list; but I am wondering if Lord Pirrie, standing for so much that makes for national greatness, is properly left out. Had I to draw up a list I should delete the name of Roosevelt and put in that of the Emperor of Austria, who should not be excluded from any list, I think."



THE KAISER.

Sir Harry Johnston is a great traveller and man of the world, who has seen and noted much concerning his fellow-men. Here is his list:—

General Booth.	Sir Donald Ross.
Andrew Carnegie.	G. B. Shaw.
G. Marconi.	President Taft.
William II.	Baden-Powell.
Thomas Edison.	Rostand.

"To select," he writes, "the ten most important persons in the civilized world of the period 1901-11 is very difficult. Why not make it the illustrious forty? Anatole France—no; and Hardy—no; both are agreeable stylists who have not really moved the world beyond restricted literary circles. *Proxime accesserunt*, Israel Zangwill; Ferrer, the Spanish educationalist; H. G. Wells; the principal Japanese commanders on land and sea (Oyama, Togo, etc.); and President Taft, decidedly. I have marked, however, ten of the most celebrated and, in my opinion, the most world-moving. The late M. Curie, Mme. Curie, and Rodin, the sculptor, are all equally famous. Do you need to be told who Sir Donald Ross is? I daresay. A pen that could inscribe Joseph Chamberlain as a man who has *done* anything (his name is writ in water) might well overlook the real tracker-down of the malarial germ and its transmitting agency—Sir Donald Ross. General Baden-Powell and his splendid boy-scout movement must not be overlooked. You ask whether Wilbur Wright is not destined to immortality. Yes; but can you not also single out some complete conqueror of the air, born yesterday morning?"

Another eminent French Academician, M. Paul Hervieu, writes:—

"Your letter does me the honour of asking me the question, 'Who are the ten most illustrious men in the world?' You are good enough to send me some lists already drawn up, and on that of Sir Harry Johnston I see the name of a lady. That authorizes me to reply to you that there is also Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, whose celebrity appears to

me world-wide. Far from being able to predict what will be the verdict of posterity, I am already much embarrassed to say which are those of my contemporaries whose names have become known in all countries. But I believe, however, that this glorious destiny has come about in French music to Massenet, to Saint-Saëns; and so in literature Edmond Rostand, Maurice Maeterlinck, Gabriele d'Annunzio, are universally known; and so also is Clemenceau, the politician. I apologize for that, in the names I suggest to you, there would be another Frenchman or so to add to the two names from my country which figure amongst the various ones of your double list. But let the man who is not blinded by patriotism cast the first stone at me. Perhaps it would be a more satisfactory plan to ask each person whom he would call the most illustrious amongst foreigners, to the exclusion of his own countrymen!"

G. MARCONI.

Another of the "Forty Immortals" of the French Academy, M. A. Mezarel, writes:—

"In these English lists France appears to me to have been a little too largely sacrificed. One single name (and not even that in Mr. Lowther's list)—it is not enough! I would add at least the painter Bonnat and the sculptor Mercié."

"At present," declares M. Jules Claretie, "France has but a single name of universal renown, and that is not the name of a man, but of a woman—Sarah Bernhardt. But there is an infinity of talent."

Mr. Max Beerbohm writes with a sly humour all his own:—

"I think you are in too great a hurry. Let time sift. Revisit the earth five hundred years or so hence, and then put your question, retrospectively, to such persons as shall be noted for their wide grasp of the history of our time, and also for their excellent impartiality of spirit. You will then, perhaps, get some answers worth having. Meanwhile, if you really want an answer from me, I cannot improve on Sir Frederick Milner's list (in which, so gratifyingly to us all, six of the ten greatest living men are British, and seven are British subjects), except by substituting for the names of the three included aliens the names of my friends Brown, Jones, and Robinson, who have in their obscurity this advantage over the majority of Sir Frederick's British others, that they, for aught you know, *may* be really great."

Mr. Harry de Windt writes to say that in his opinion any list of the ten greatest men in the world should contain the name of Commander Robert E. Peary, the discoverer of the North Pole. This raises an interesting question—for which posterity must supply an answer: Why is it that the name of a man who has achieved what so many for so long have attempted to do and failed, one of the greatest achievements of discovery, and certainly the most daring and arduous since Columbus, should be omitted from every list? And Nansen, who was hailed a few years ago as almost a demigod, hardly fares any better.

In the list supplied us by Mr. Burdett-Coutts, M.P., these names figure:—

Joseph Chamberlain.	Emperor Mutsuhito of Japan.
Admiral Togo.	William II.
President Taft.	Edison.
J. Pierpont Morgan.	Nansen.
G. Marconi.	
Rudyard Kipling.	

"There are two names in the Speaker's list," writes Sir Edward Russell, "that I should have struck out. There is one name about which I am doubtful. But I should think that in a list of the ten greatest men Lord Morley should have been included."

"In compiling a list of the ten greatest men in the world," writes Sir William Bull, M.P., "I would esteem discoverers and inventors more than any other. There is no

painter of first-rate eminence now living, in my opinion. Here is my list, in order of merit :—

Lord Lister.	Thomas A. Edison.
Prof. Elie Metchnikoff.	Aston Webb.
John Thorneycroft.	Wilbur Wright.
Joseph Chamberlain.	Hon. Charles Parsons (inventor of the turbine).
G. Marconi.	
Rudyard Kipling.	

"If Mme. Curie, the discoverer of radium, were a man, I should substitute her name for that of Mr. Chamberlain."

"There is no living painter who could be called great." Such is the dictum of Admiral C. C. P. Fitzgerald, whose list contains the names of—

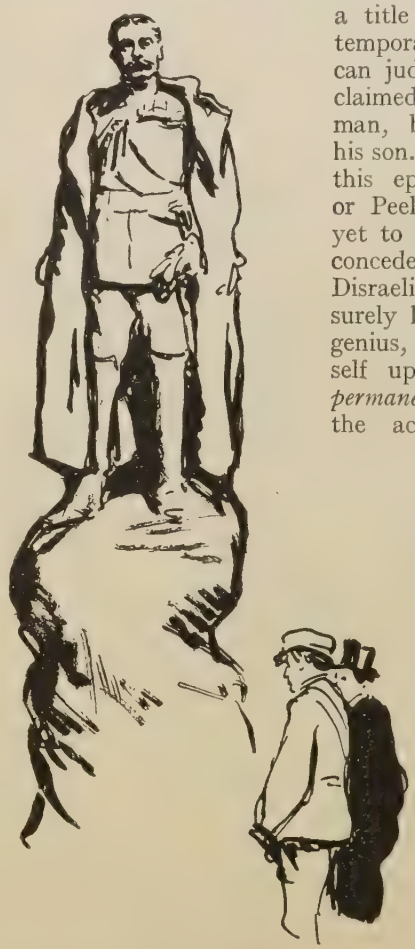
Joseph Chamberlain.	Lord Cromer.
Theodore Roosevelt.	Rudyard Kipling.
Admiral Togo.	Anatole France.
Edison.	Marconi.
Lord Strathcona.	Lord Roberts.

Lord Strathcona's is a novel name in the lists, but it is somewhat astonishing that Lord Cromer's does not figure more frequently.

"I am surprised," writes a distinguished Italian publicist, Signor Tittoni, "that amongst the English names in this list of eighteen illustrious men that of Lord Cromer does not appear. For not only to Italians, but surely to the people of other nations, it must seem strange that the man to whom, more than any other, England owes Egypt is not regarded as a great man. Italy might offer the names of d'Annunzio, Marconi, and Ferrero."

"I think," writes Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, "that Mr. Lloyd George should certainly go in the list of the ten greatest men in the world. I also think that Barrie is as much greater than Maeterlinck as 'Peter Pan' is than 'The Blue Bird.'"

Miss Braddon's list would be the same as Sir Frederick Milner's, except that for one name she would substitute a painter's—not Mr. Sargent's, but "either Peter Graham, J. Farquharson, or Byam Shaw."



LORD KITCHENER.

"Doubtless," writes Mr. Clement Shorter, the well-known editor of the *Sphere*, "there are many great men living in the world to-day—men with prospective greatness, that is, or even achieved greatness—but only time can decide. In my judgment there is no man in the world to-day who is great in any walk of life in so striking a way that his contemporaries can unhesitatingly proclaim him great. I am amazed that Mr. Lowther should concede so imposing a title to his political contemporaries. History alone can judge. History has proclaimed the elder Pitt a great man, but not so certainly his son. It has not assigned this epithet to Palmerston or Peel, and it is too early yet to decide whether it will concede it to Gladstone or Disraeli. The great man is surely he who, by force of genius, has impressed himself upon his age in some *permanent* form. Whether the achievements of Mr. Roosevelt or of Emperor William are of this character had better be decided a century hence. As you ask me, however, to join in what can scarcely be a serious discussion, I suggest that we take the name of a living man from each country who has, by invention or creation, stamped himself upon his age. I therefore nominate the ten greatest men of the present day as follows :—

Great Britain	Thomas Hardy.
Great Britain	Lord Lister.
United States	Thomas A. Edison.
Italy	Guglielmo Marconi.
Italy	Giacomo Puccini.
France	François Coppée.
Austria	Richard Strauss.
Germany	Hermann Sudermann.
Belgium	Maurice Maeterlinck.
Russia	Elie Metchnikoff.

"I should like," Mr. Shorter adds, "to have

added Auguste Strindberg for Sweden, and Ernst Haeckel for Germany, but I cannot give up any one of my ten."

ELIE METCHNIKOFF.

"Of course," writes Mr. W. L. Courtney, "all these lists must be more or less arbitrary, depending upon individual taste. Personally I do not think that either Rostand or Maeterlinck should go amongst the ten, though they easily might amongst the twenty. If I had to shorten Mr. Lowther's list, I should leave out Chamberlain, Rosebery, and Porfirio Diaz. Otherwise, I think the list is a very fair one, except that a year or two hence you will have, I fear, to include the name of Lloyd George!"

Finally, we have received a letter from a gentleman who has filled a position of some trust and responsibility not unconnected with the Court. He writes:—

"I have been deeply interested in studying the lists of what various Englishmen (including the First Commoner) consider the ten greatest men now living; and it has struck me that perhaps you might like to print a speculation on my part of what the list of His Majesty King George V. would be. I think it would run somewhat in this fashion:—

Lord Kitchener. Lord Roberts.
Lord Rosebery. Emperor William.
Theodore Roosevelt. Edison.
Emperor Mutsuhito. Kipling.
J. Chamberlain. Asquith."

The foregoing speculation is certainly most interesting, even though the writer begs that his name be withheld.

What now is the result of these most diversified and representative opinions? If we make a list of names according to the number of votes which each has received we obtain the following:—

Edison.
Kipling.
Roosevelt.
Marconi.
Lister.
Chamberlain.
Roberts.
William II.
Metchnikoff.

These are the first nine. For the last place it is an open question, as certain of the replies are a little vague, whether it would be held by Rosebery, Togo, or Kitchener.

LORD ROSEBERY.

HIS OTHER SELF

BY

W·W·JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

"THEY'RE as like as two peas, him and 'is brother," said the night-watchman, gazing blandly at the indignant face of the lighterman on the barge below; "and the on'y way I know this one is Sam is because Bill don't use bad langwidge. Twins they are, but the likeness is only outside; Bill's 'art is as white as snow."

He cut off a plug of tobacco, and, placing it in his cheek, waited expectantly.

"White as snow," he repeated.

"That's me," said the lighterman, as he pushed his unwieldy craft from the jetty. "I'll tell Sam your opinion of 'im. So long."

The watchman went a shade redder than usual. That's twins all over, he said, sourly, always deceiving people. It's Bill arter all, and, instead of hurting 'is feelings, I've just been flattering of 'im up.

It ain't the fust time I've 'ad trouble over a likeness. I've been a twin myself in a manner o' speaking. It didn't last long, but it lasted long enough for me to always be sorry for twins, and to make a lot of allowance for them. It must be very 'ard to have another man going about with your face on 'is shoulders, and getting it into trouble.

It was a year or two ago now. I was sitting one evening in the wicket, smoking a pipe and looking at a newspaper I 'ad found in the office, when I see a gentleman coming along from the swing-bridge. Well-dressed, clean-shaved chap 'e was, smoking a cigarette. He was walking slow and looking about 'im casual-like, until his eyes fell on me, when he gave a perfect jump of surprise, and, arter looking at me very 'ard, walked on a little way and then turned back. He did it twice, and I was just going to say something to 'im, something that I 'ad been getting ready for 'im, when he spoke to me.

"Good evening," he ses.

"Good evening," I ses, folding the paper over and looking at 'im rather severe.

"I hope you'll excuse me staring," he ses, very perlite; "but I've never seen such a face and figger as yours in all my life—never."

"Ah, you ought to ha' seen me a few years ago," I ses. "I'm like everybody else—I'm getting on."

"Rubbish!" he ses. "You couldn't be better if you tried. It's marvellous! Won-

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derful! It's the very thing I've been looking for. Why, if you'd been made to order you couldn't ha' been better."

I thought at fust he was by way of trying to get a drink out o' me—I've been played that game afore—but instead o' that he asked me whether I'd do 'im the pleasure of 'aving one with 'im.

We went over to the Albion, and I believe I could have 'ad it in a pail if I'd on'y liked to say the word. And all the time I was drinking he was looking me up and down, till I didn't know where to look, as the saying is.

"I came down 'ere to look for somebody like you," he ses, "but I never dreamt I should have such luck as this. I'm an actor, and I've got to play the part of a sailor, and I've been worried some time 'ow to make up for the part. D'ye understand?"

"No," I ses, looking at 'im.

"I want to look the real thing," he ses, speaking low so the landlord shouldn't hear. "I want to make myself the living image of you. If that don't fetch 'em I'll give up the stage and grow cabbages."

"Make yourself like me?" I ses. "Why, you're no more like me than I'm like a sea-sick monkey."

"Not so much," he ses. "That's where the art comes in."

He stood me another drink, and then, taking my arm in a cuddling sort o' way, and calling me "Dear boy," 'e led me back to the wharf and explained. He said 'e would come round next evening with wot 'e called his make-up box, and paint 'is face and make 'imself up till people wouldn't know one from the other.

"And wot about your figger?" I ses, looking at 'im.

"A cushion," he ses, winking, "or maybe a couple. And what about clothes? You'll 'ave to sell me those you've got on. Hat and all. And boots."

I put a price on 'em that I thought would 'ave finished 'im then and there, but it didn't. And at last, arter paying me so many more compliments that they began to get into my 'ead, he fixed up a meeting for the next night and went off.

"And mind," he ses, coming back, "not a word to a living soul!"

He went off agin, and, arter going to the Bull's Head and 'aving a pint to clear my 'ead, I went and sat down in the office and thought it over. It seemed all right to me as far as I could see; but p'r'aps the pint didn't clear my 'ead enough—p'r'aps I ought to 'ave 'ad two pints.

I lay awake best part of next day thinking it over, and when I got up I 'ad made up my mind. I put my clothes in a sack, and then I put on some others as much like 'em as possible, on'y p'r'aps a bit older, in case the missis should get asking questions; and then I sat wondering 'ow to get out with the sack without 'er noticing it. She's got a very inquiring mind, and I wasn't going to tell 'er any lies about it. Besides which I couldn't think of one.

I got out at last by playing a game on her. I pertended to drop arf-a-dollar in the washus, and while she was busy on 'er hands and knees I went off as comfortable as you please.

I got into the office with it all right, and, just as it was getting dark, a cab drove up to the wharf and the actor-chap jumped out with a big leather bag. I took 'im into the private office, and 'e was so ready with 'is money for the clothes that I offered to throw the sack in.

He changed into my clothes fust of all, and then, asking me to sit down in front of 'im, he took a looking-glass and a box out of 'is bag and began to alter 'is face. Wot with sticks of coloured paint, and false eyebrows, and a beard stuck on with gum and trimmed with a pair o' scissors, it was more like a conjuring trick than anything else. Then 'e took a wig out of 'is bag and pressed it on his 'ead, put on the cap, put some black stuff on 'is teeth, and there he was. We both looked into the glass together while 'e gave the finishing touches, and then he clapped me on the back and said I was the handsomest sailorman in England.

"I shall have to make up a bit 'eavier when I'm behind the floats," he ses; "but this is enough for 'ere. Wot do you think of the imitation of your voice? I think I've got it exact."

"If you ask me," I ses, "it sounds like a poll-parrot with a cold in the 'ead."

"And now for your walk," he ses, looking as pleased as if I'd said something else. "Come to the door and see me go up the wharf."

I didn't like to hurt 'is feelings, but I thought I should ha' bust. He walked up that wharf like a dancing-bear in a pair of trousers too tight for it, but 'e was so pleased with 'imself that I didn't like to tell 'im so. He went up and down two or three times, and I never saw anything so ridikerlous in my life.

"That's all very well for us," he ses; "but wot about other people? That's wot I want

to know. I'll go and 'ave a drink, and see whether anybody spots me."

Afore I could stop 'im he started off to the Bull's Head and went in, while I stood outside and watched 'im.

"Arf a pint o' four ale," he ses, smacking down a penny.

I see the landlord draw the beer and give it to 'im, but 'e didn't seem to take no notice of 'im. Then, just to open 'is eyes a bit, I walked in and put down a penny and asked for a arf-pint.

The landlord was just wiping down the counter at the time, and when I gave my order he looked up and stood staring at me with the wet cloth 'eld up in the air. He didn't say a word—not a single word. He stood there for a moment smiling at us foolish-like, and then 'e let go o' the beer-injin, wot 'e was 'olding in 'is left hand, and sat down heavy on the bar floor. We both put our 'eads over the counter to see wot had 'appened to 'im, and 'e started making the most 'orrible noise I 'ave ever heard in my life. I wonder it didn't bring the fire-injins. The actor-chap bolted out as if he'd been shot, and I was just thinking of follering 'im when the landlord's wife and 'is two daughters came rushing out and asking me wot I 'ad done to him.

"There—there—was two of 'im!" ses the landlord, trembling and holding on to 'is wife's arm, as they helped 'im up and got 'im in the chair. "Two of 'im!"

"Two of wot?" ses his wife.

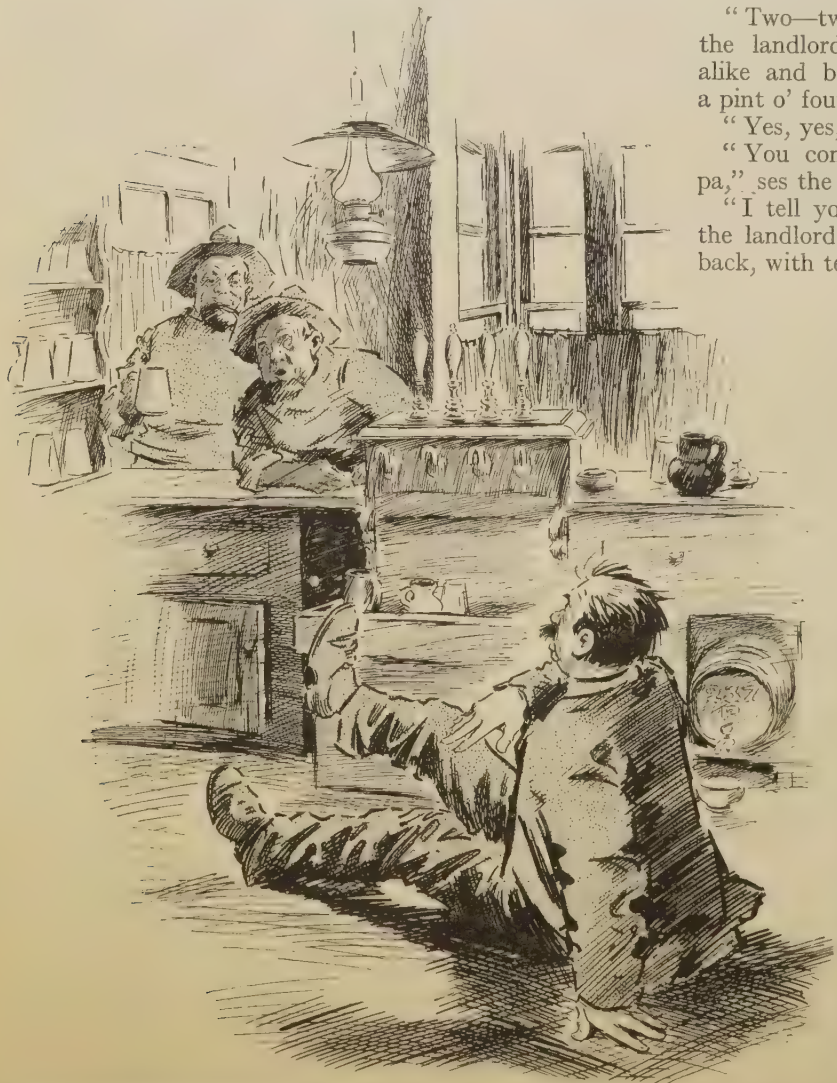
"Two—two watchmen," ses the landlord; "both exac'ly alike and both asking for arf a pint o' four ale."

"Yes, yes," ses 'is wife.

"You come and lay down, pa," ses the gals.

"I tell you there was," ses the landlord, getting 'is colour back, with temper.

"Yes, yes; I know all about it," ses 'is wife. "You come inside for a bit; and, Gertie, you bring your father in a soda—a large soda."



"'E STARTED MAKING THE MOST 'ORRIBLE NOISE I 'AVE EVER HEARD IN MY LIFE."

They got 'im in arter a lot o' trouble; but three times 'e came back as far as the door, 'olding on to them, and taking a little peep at me. The last time he shook his 'ead at me, and said if I did it agin I could go and get my arf-pints somewhere else.

I finished the beer wot the actor 'ad left, and, arter telling the landlord I 'oped his eyesight 'ud be

"I NEVER SAW ANYTHING SO RIDIKERLOUS IN MY LIFE."

better in the morning, I went outside, and arter a careful look round walked back to the wharf.

I pushed the wicket open a little way and peeped in. The actor was standing just by the fust crane talking to two of the hands off of the *Saltram*. He'd got 'is back to the light, but 'ow it was they didn't twig his voice I can't think.

They was so busy talking that I crept along by the side of the wall and got to the office without their seeing me. I went into the private office and turned cut the gas there, and sat down to wait for 'im. Then I 'eard a noise outside that took me to the door agin and kept me there, 'olding on to the door-post and gasping for my breath. The cook of the *Saltram* was sitting on a paraffin-cask playing the mouth-orgin, and the actor, with 'is arms folded across his stummick, was dancing a horn-pipe as if he'd gorn mad.

I never saw anything so ridikerlous in my life, and when I recollected that they thought it was *me*, I thought I should ha' dropped. A night-watchman can't be too careful, and I knew that it 'ud be all over Wapping next morning that I 'ad been dancing to a tuppenny-ha'penny mouth-orgin played by a ship's cook. A man that does 'is dooty always has a lot of people ready to believe the worst of 'im.

I went back into the dark office and waited, and by and by I 'eard them coming along to the gate and patting 'im on the back and saying he ought to be in a pantermime instead o wasting 'is time night-watching. He left 'em at the gate, and then 'e came into the office smiling as if he'd done something clever.

"Wot d'ye think of me for a understudy?" he ses, laughing. "They all thought it was you. There wasn't one of 'em 'ad the slightest suspicion—not one."

"And wot about my character?" I ses, folding my arms acrost my chest and looking at him.

"Character?" he ses, staring. Why, there's no 'arm in dancing; it's a innercent enjoyment."

"It ain't one o' my innercent enjoyments," I ses, "and I don't want to get the credit of it. If they hadn't been sitting in a pub all the evening they'd 'ave spotted you at once."

"Oh!" he ses, very huffy. "How?"

"Your voice," I ses. "You try and mimic a poll-parrot, and think it's like me. And, for another thing, you walk about as though you're stuffed with sawdust."

"I beg your pardon," he ses; "the voice and the walk are exact. Exact."

"*Wot?*" I ses, looking 'im up and down. "You stand there and 'ave the impudence to tell me that my voice is like that?"

"I do," he ses.

"Then I'm sorry for you," I ses. "I thought you'd got more sense."

He stood looking at me and gnawing 'is finger, and by and by he ses, "Are you married?" he ses.

"I am," I ses, very short.

"Where do you live?" he ses.

I told 'im.

"Very good," he ses; "p'r'aps I'll be able to convince you arter all. By the way, wot do you call your wife? Missis?"

"Yes," I ses, staring at 'im. "But wot's it got to do with you?"

"Nothing," he ses. "Nothing. Only I'm going to try the poll-parrot voice and the sawdust walk on her, that's all. If I can deceive 'er that'll settle it."

"Deceive *her?*" I ses. "Do you think I'm going to let you go round to my 'ouse and get me into trouble with the missis like that? Why, you must be crazy; that dancing must 'ave got into your 'ead."

"Where's the 'arm?" he ses, very sulky.

"'*Arm?*" I ses. "I won't 'ave it, that's all; and if you knew my missis you'd know without any telling."

"I'll bet you a pound to a sixpence she wouldn't know me," he ses, very earnest.

"She won't 'ave the chance," I ses, "so that's all about it."

He stood there argufying for about ten minutes; but I was as firm as a rock. I wouldn't move an inch, and at last, arter we was both on the point of losing our tempers, he picked up his bag and said as 'ow he must be getting off 'ome.

"But ain't you going to take those things off fust?" I ses.

"No," he ses, smiling. "I'll wait till I get 'ome. Ta-ta."

He put 'is bag on 'is shoulder and walked to the gate, with me follering of 'im.

"I expect I shall see a cab soon," he ses. "Good-bye."

"Wot are you laughing at?" I ses.

"On'y thoughts," he ses.

"'Ave you got far to go?" I ses.

"No; just about the same distance as you 'ave," he ses, and he went off spluttering like a soda-water bottle.

I took the broom and 'ad a good sweep-up arter he 'ad gorn, and I was just in the middle of it when the cook and the other two chaps from the *Saltram* came back, with three other sailormen and a brewer's drayman they 'ad brought to see me DANCE!

"Same as you did a little while ago, Bill," ses the cook, taking out 'is beastly mouth-orgin and wiping it on 'is sleeve. "Wot toon would you like?"

I couldn't get away from 'em, and when I told them I 'ad never danced in my life the cook asked me where I expected to go to. He told the drayman that I'd been dancing like a fairy in sea-boots, and they all got in front of me and wouldn't let me pass. I lost my temper at last, and, arter they 'ad taken the broom away from me and the drayman and one o' the sailormen 'ad said wot they'd do to me if I was on'y fifty years younger, they sheered off.

I locked the gate arter 'em and went back to the office, and I 'adn't been there above arf an hour when somebody started ringing the gate-bell as if they was mad. I thought it was the cook's lot come back at fust, so I opened the wicket just a trifle and peeped out. There was a 'ansom-cab standing outside, and I 'ad hardly got my nose to the crack when the actor-chap, still in my clothes, pushed the door open and nipped in.

"You've lost," he ses, pushing the door to and smiling all over. "Where's your sixpence?"

"*Lost?*" I ses, hardly able to speak. "D'ye mean to tell me you've been to my wife arter all—arter all I said to you?"

"I do," he ses, nodding, and smiling agin. "They were both deceived as easy as easy."

"*Both?*" I ses, staring at 'im. "Both wot? 'Ow many wives d'ye think I've got? Wot d'ye mean by it?"

"Arter I left you," he ses, giving me a little poke in the ribs, "I picked up a cab and, fust leaving my bag at Aldgate, I drove on to your 'ouse and knocked at the door. I knocked twice, and then an angry-looking woman opened it and asked me wot I wanted.

"'It's all right, missis,' I ses. 'I've got arf an hour off, and I've come to take you out for a walk.'

"'*Wot?*' she ses, drawing back with a start.

"'Just a little turn round to see the shops,' I ses; 'and if there's anything particler you'd like and it don't cost too much, you shall 'ave it.'

"I thought at fust, from the way she took it, she wasn't used to you giving 'er things.

"''Ow dare you!' she ses. 'I'll 'ave you locked up. 'Ow dare you insult a respectable married woman! You wait till my 'usband comes 'ome.'

"'But I am your 'usband,' I ses. 'Don't you know me, my pretty? Don't you know your pet sailor-boy?'

"She gave a screech like a steam-injin, and then she went next door and began knocking away like mad. Then I see that I 'ad gorn to number twelve instead of number fourteen. Your wife, your real wife, came out of number fourteen—and she was worse than the other. But they both thought it was you—there's no doubt of that. They chased me all the way up the road, and if it 'adn't ha' been for this cab that was just passing I don't know wot would 'ave 'appened to me."

He shook his 'ead and smiled agin, and, arter opening the wicket a trifle and telling the cabman he shouldn't be long, he turned to me and asked me for the sixpence, to wear on his watch-chain.

"*Sixpence!*" I ses. "SIXPENCE! Wot do you think is going to 'appen to me when I go 'ome?"

"Oh, I 'adn't thought o' that," he ses. "Yes, o' course."

"Wot about my wife's jealousy?" I ses. "Wot about the other, and her 'usband, a cooper as big as a 'ouse?"

"Well, well," he ses, "one can't think of everything. It'll be all the same a hundred years hence."

"Look 'ere," I ses, taking 'is shoulder in a grip of iron. "You come back with me now in that cab and explain. D'ye see? That's wot you've got to do."

"All right," he ses; "certainly. Is — is the husband bad-tempered?"

"You'll see," I ses; "but that's your business. Come along."

"With pleasure," he ses, 'elping me in. "Arf a mo' while I tell the cabby where to drive to."

He went to the back o' the cab, and afore I knew wot had 'appened the 'orse had got a flick over the head with the whip and was going along at a gallop. I kept putting the little flap up and telling the cabby to stop, but he didn't take the slightest notice. Arter I'd done it three times he kept it down so as I couldn't open it.

There was a crowd round my door when the cab drove up, and in the middle of it was my missis, the woman next door, and 'er husband, wot 'ad just come 'ome. Arf-a-dozen of 'em helped me out, and afore I could say a word the cabman drove off and left me there.

I dream of it now sometimes: standing there explaining and explaining, until, just as I feel I can't bear it any longer, two policemen come up and 'elp me indoors. If they had 'elped my missis outside it would be a easier dream to have.

"STANDING THERE EXPLAINING AND EXPLAINING."

MR. WELLS'S SONS PLAYING THE GAMES DESCRIBED BY THEIR FATHER IN THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE.
From a Photograph.

FLOOR GAMES.

By H. G. WELLS.

I.

THE TOYS TO HAVE.

THE jolliest indoor games for boys and girls demand a floor, and the home that has no floor upon which games may be played falls so far short of happiness. It must be a floor covered with linoleum or cork carpet, so that toy soldiers and suchlike will stand up upon it, and of a colour and surface that will take and show chalk marks; the common, green-coloured cork carpet, without a pattern, is the best of all. It must be no highway to other rooms, and well lit and airy. Occasionally, alas! it must be scrubbed—and then a truce to floor games! Upon such a floor may be made an infinitude of imaginative games, not only keeping boys and girls happy for days together, but building up a framework of spacious and inspiring ideas in them for after life. The British Empire will gain new strength from nursery floors. I am going to tell of some of these games and what is most needed to play them; I have tried them all, and a score of others like them, with my sons, and all of the games here illustrated have been set out by us. I am going to tell of them here, because I think what we have done will interest other fathers and mothers and, perhaps, be of use to them (and to uncles and suchlike tributary species of humanity) in buying presents for their own and other people's children.

Now, the toys we play with time after time and in a thousand permutations and combinations belong to four main groups. We have (1) soldiers, and with these I class sailors, railway porters, civilians, and the lower animals generally, such as I will presently describe in greater detail; (2) bricks; (3) boards and planks; and (4) a lot of clockwork railway rolling stock and rails. Also, there are certain minor objects—tin ships, Easter eggs, plasticine, and the like—of which I shall make incidental mention, that, like the kiwi and the duck-billed platypus, refuse to be classified. These we arrange and re-arrange in various ways upon our floor, making a world of them. In doing so we have found out all sorts of pleasant facts, and also many undesirable possibilities; and very probably our experience will help a reader here and there to the former and save him from the latter.

For instance, our planks and boards and what one can do with them have been a great discovery. Lots of boys and girls seem to be quite without planks and boards at all, and there is no regular trade in them. The toy-shops do not keep anything of the sort. (We don't, as a matter of fact, think very much of toy-shops. We think they trifle with great possibilities. We consider them expensive

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and incompetent, and flatten our noses against their plate-glass, perhaps, but only in the most critical spirit.) Our boards, which we had to get made by a carpenter, are the basis of half the games we play. The planks and boards we have are of various sizes. We began with three, of two yards by one; they were made with cross pieces, like small doors; but these we found unnecessarily large, and we would not get them now after our present experience. The best thickness, we think, is an inch for the larger sizes, and three-quarters and a half inch for the smaller; and the best sizes are a yard square, thirty inches square, two feet, eighteen inches square—one or two of each, and a greater number of smaller ones, eighteen by nine, nine by nine, and nine by four and a half inches. With the larger ones we make islands and archipelagoes on our floor, while the floor is a sea, or we make a large island or a couple on the Venice pattern; or we pile the smaller on the larger to make hills when the floor is a level plain, or they roof in railway stations or serve as bridges, in such manner as I will presently illustrate. And these boards of ours pass into our next most important possession, which is a box of bricks.

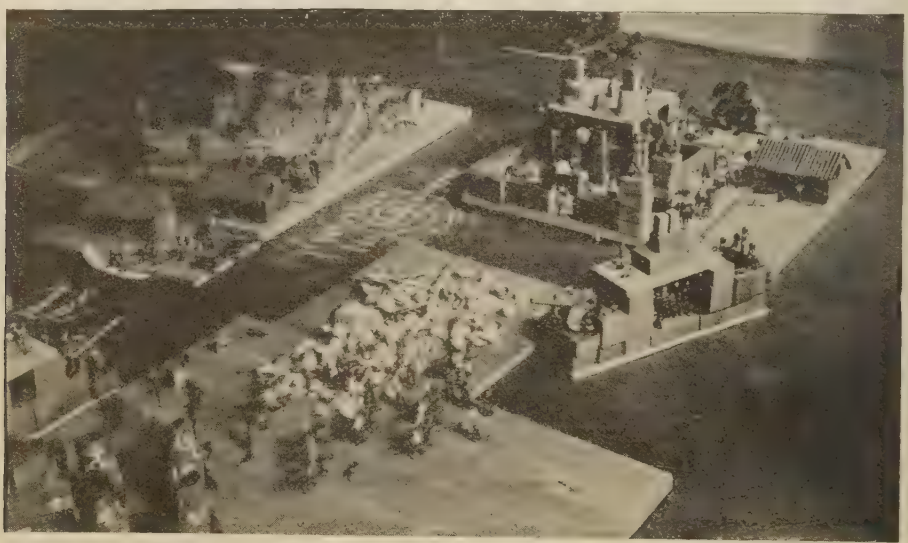
(But I was nearly forgetting to tell this—that all the thicker and larger of these boards have holes bored through them. At about every four inches is a hole, a little larger than an ordinary gimlet-hole. These holes have their uses, as I will tell later; but now let me get on to the box of bricks.)

This, again, wasn't a toy-shop acquisition. It came to us by gift from two generous friends, unhappily growing up and very tall at that; and they had it from parents, who were one of several families who shared in the benefit of a Good Uncle. I know nothing certainly of this man except that he was a Radford, of Plymouth; I have never learnt nor cared to learn of his commoner occupations, but certainly he was one of those shining and distinguished uncles that tower up at times above the common levels of humanity. At times when we consider our derived and undeserved share of his inheritance, and count the joys it gives us, we have projected, half in jest and half in earnest, the putting together of a little exemplary book upon the subject of such exceptional men. "Celebrated Uncles," it should be called; and it should stir up all who read it to some striving at least towards the glories of the avuncular crown. What this great benefactor did was to engage a deserving unemployed carpenter through an entire winter, making big boxes of wooden bricks for the almost innumerable nephews and nieces with which an appreciative circle of brothers and sisters had blessed him. There are whole bricks four and a half inches by two and a quarter by one and one-eighth; and there are half-bricks two and a quarter inches by two and a quarter by one and one-eighth; and there are quarters, called by those previous owners (who have now ascended to, we hope but scarcely believe, a happier life near the ceiling) "piggys." You note how these sizes fit into the sizes of our boards; and of each size—we have never counted them — we must have hundreds. We can pave a dozen square yards of floor with them.

How utterly we despise the silly little bricks of the toy-shops! They are too small to make a decent home for even the poorest lead soldiers, even if there are hundreds of them; and there are never enough—never nearly enough, even if you take one at a time and lay it down and say, "This is a house"; even then there are not enough. We see rich people—rich people out of motor-cars—rich people beyond the dreams of avarice—going into toy-shops and buying these skimpy, sickly, ridiculous pseudo-boxes of bricklets, because they do not know what to ask for, and the toy-shops are just the merciless mercenary enemies of youth and happiness—so far, that is, as bricks are concerned. Their unfortunate under-parented offspring mess about with these gifts, and don't make very much of them, and put them away; and you see their consequences in after-life in the weakly-conceived villas and silly suburbs that people have built all round London. Such poor, under-nourished nurseries must needs fall back upon the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and even that is becoming flexible on India paper! But our box of bricks almost satisfies. With our box of bricks we can scheme and build, all three of us, for the best part of an hour, and still have more bricks in the box.

So much now for the bricks. I will tell later how we use cartridge paper and card and other things to help in our building, and of the decorative use we make of plasticine. Of course it goes without saying that we despise those foolish, expensive made-up wooden and pasteboard castles that are sold in shops; playing with them is like playing with somebody else's dead game in a state of *rigor mortis*. Let me now say a little about toy soldiers and the world to which they belong. Toy soldiers used to be flat, small creatures in my own boyhood, in comparison

with the magnificent beings one can buy to-day. There has been an enormous improvement in our national physique in this respect. Now they stand nearly two inches high and look you broadly in the face, and they have the movable arms and alert intelligence of scientifically-exercised men.



THE GAME OF THE WONDERFUL ISLANDS, IN WHICH THE FLOOR REPRESENTS THE SEA—NOTE THE SHIP CALLING AT ONE OF THE ISLANDS.
From a] [Photograph.

You get five of them mounted or nine afoot in a box for tenpence-halfpenny. We three like those of British manufacture best; other makes are of incompatible sizes; and we have a rule, that saves much trouble, that all redcoats belong to G. P. W., and all other-coloured coats to F. R. W., all gifts, bequests, and accidents notwithstanding. Also we have sailors; but, since there are no red-coated sailors, blue counts as red.

Then we have beefeaters, Red Indians, Zulus, for whom there are special rules. We find we can buy lead dogs, cats, lions, tigers, horses, camels, cattle, and elephants of a reasonably corresponding size; and we have also several boxes of railway-porters, and some soldiers we bought in Hesse-Darmstadt that we pass off on an unsuspecting home world as policemen. But we want civilians very badly. We found a box of German civilians once in a shop in Oxford Street near the Marble Arch—the right size, but rather heavy, and running to nearly twopence-halfpenny apiece, which is too dear: gentlemen in tweed suits carrying bags, a top-hatted gentleman, ladies in grey and white, two children and a dog, and so on. But we have never been able to find any more. They do not seem to be made in England at all—will toy-manufacturers please note? I write now as if I were British Consul-General in Toyland, noting new opportunities for trade. Consequent upon this dearth, our little world suffers from an exaggerated curse of militarism, and even the grocer wears epaulettes. This might please Lord Roberts and Mr. Leo Maxse, but it certainly does not please us. I wish, indeed, that we could buy boxes of tradesmen—a blue butcher, a white baker with a loaf of standard bread, a draper or so, boxes of servants, boxes of street traffic, smart sets, and so forth. We could do with a judge and barristers, or a box of vestrymen. It is true that we can buy Salvation Army lasses and football players, but we are cold to both of these. We have, of course, boy-scouts. With such boxes of civilians we could have much more fun than with the running, marching, swashbuckling soldiery that pervades us. They drive us to reviews, and it is only emperors and kings and very silly small boys who can take an undying interest in uniforms and reviews.

And lastly, of our railways, let me merely remark here that we have always insisted upon one uniform gauge. We have adhered rigidly to gauge O, and everything we buy fits into and develops our existing railway system. Nothing is more indicative of the rambling sort of parent, and a coterie of witless, worthless uncles, than a heap of railway toys of different gauges and natures in the children's playroom. And so, having told you of the material we have, let me now tell you of one or two games (out of the

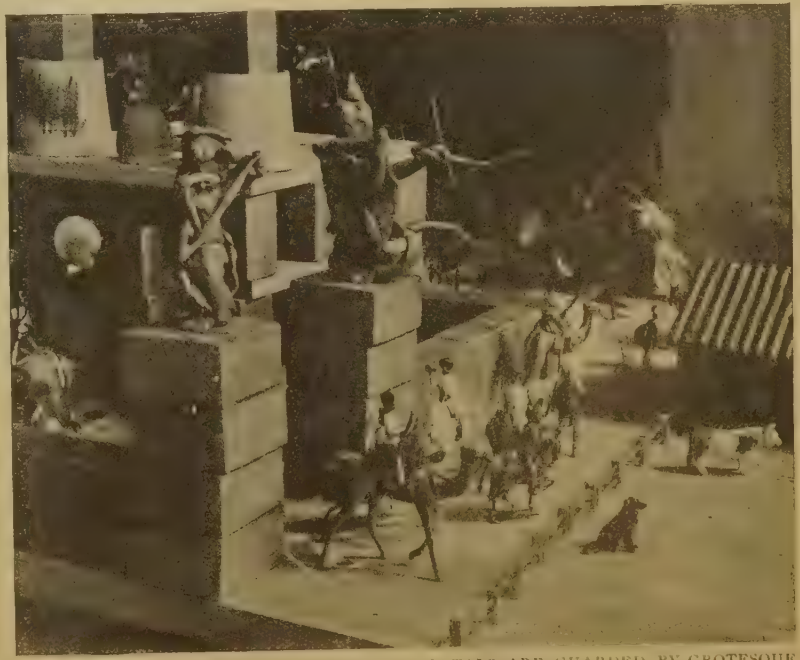
innumerable many) that we have played. Of course in this I have to be a little artificial. Actual games of the kind I am illustrating here have been played by us many and many a time, with joy and happy invention and no thought of publication. They have gone now, those games, into that vaguely luminous and iridescent world of memories into which all love-engendering happiness must go. But we have tried our best to set them out again and recall the good points in them here.

II.

THE GAME OF THE WONDERFUL ISLANDS.

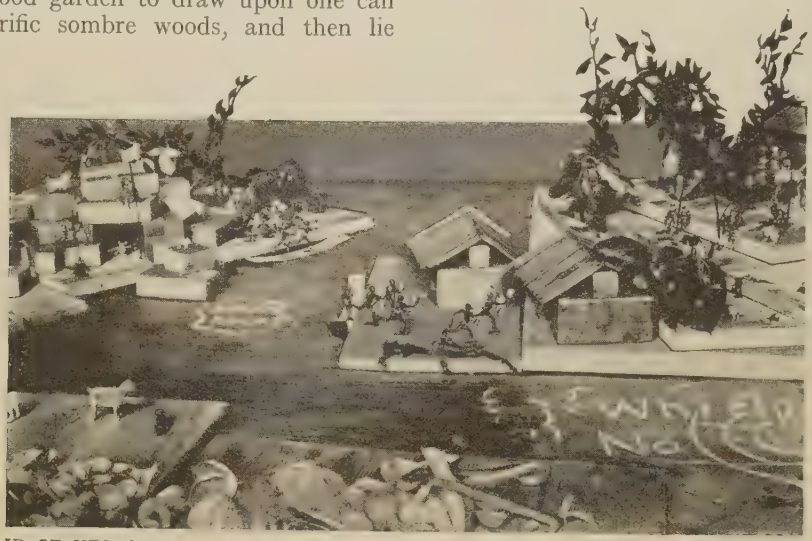
In this game the floor is the sea. Half—rather the larger half, because of some instinctive right of primogeniture—is assigned to the elder of my two sons; he is, as it were, its Olympian; and the other half goes to his brother. We distribute the boards about the sea in an archipelagic manner. We then dress our islands, objecting strongly to too close a scrutiny of our proceedings until we have done. In the preceding illustration is such an archipelago ready for its explorers, or, rather, on the verge of exploration. On the whole it is Indian in character—comprehensively Indian, East and West and Red Indian, as befits children of an Imperial people. There are altogether four islands—two to the reader's right and two to the left, and the nearer ones are the more northerly; it is as many as we could get into the camera. The northern island to the right is most advanced in civilization, and is chiefly temple. The temple has a flat roof diversified by domes made of half Easter eggs and those card things the cream comes in. These are surmounted by a decorative work of a flamboyant character in plasticine, designed by G. P. W. An Oriental population crowds the courtyard and pours out upon the roadway. Note the grotesque plasticine monsters who guard the portals, also by G. P. W., who had a free hand with the architecture of this remarkable specimen of Eastern religiosity. They are nothing, you may be sure, to the gigantic idols inside, out of the reach of the sacrilegious camera. To the right is a tropical thatched hut. The thatched roof is really that nice ribbed paper that comes round bottles, a priceless boon to these games. All that comes into the house is saved for us. The owner of the hut is hidden in the shadows. He is a dismounted cavalry-corps man, and he owns one cow. It cost ninepence-halfpenny—a monstrous sum. If the toy-soldier manufacturers had the sense to sell boxes of cows and pigs his farm—poor dear!—would be better stocked. But they haven't; they just go on making soldiers. His fence, I may note, belonged to a little wooden farm we bought in Switzerland. Its human inhabitants are scattered; its beasts follow a precarious living as wild guinea-pigs on the islands to the south.

Your attention is particularly directed to the trees about and behind the temple, which thicken to a forest on the farther island to the left. These trees we make of twigs taken from trees and bushes in the garden and stuck into holes in our boards. Formerly we lived in a house with a little wood close by, and our forests were wonderful. Now we



A CLOSER VIEW OF THE TEMPLE WHOSE PORTALS ARE GUARDED BY GROTESQUE MONSTERS MADE OF PLASTICINE.
From a] [Photograph.

are restricted to a Hampstead garden, and we could get nothing for this set-out but jasmine and pear. Both have wilted a little, and are not nearly such spirited trees as you can make out of tamarisk, euonymus, fir, ilex, or may. It is for these woods chiefly that we have our planks perforated with little holes. No tin trees can ever be so plausible and various and jolly as these. With a good garden to draw upon one can make terrific sombre woods, and then lie down and look through them at lonely horsemen or wandering beasts.



A RAID OF NEGROID SAVAGES IS IN PROGRESS—THE ONLY SETTLER CLEARLY VISIBLE IS THE MAN RUNNING INLAND FOR HELP.
From a] [Photograph.

That farther island on the left is a less settled country than the island of the temple. Camels, you note, run wild there; there is a sort of dwarf elephant, similar to the now extinct kind of which one finds skeletons in Malta; pigs (or rather—confound these unenterprising tradesmen!—one costly, inadequate pig), and a red parrot, and other such creatures of lead and wood. The pear-trees are fine. It is those which have attracted white settlers (I suppose they are), whose thatched huts are to be seen both upon the beach and inland. By the huts on the beach lie a number of pear-tree logs; but a raid of negroid savages from the adjacent island to the left is in progress, and the only settler clearly visible is the man in a rifleman's uniform running inland for help. Beyond, their white helmets peeping out among the trees, are the supports he seeks.

These same negroid savages are as bold as they are ferocious. They cross arms of the sea upon their rude canoes, made simply of a strip of cardboard. Their own island, the one to the left-back in the figure above, is a rocky wilderness, containing caves. Their chief food is the wild goat; but in pursuit of these creatures you will also sometimes find the brown sixpenny bear, who sits—he is small, but perceptible to the careful student—in the mouth of his cave. Here, too, you will distinguish small, guinea-pig-like creatures of wood, in happier days the inhabitants of that Swiss farm. Sunken rocks off this island are indicated by a white foam which takes the form of letters, and you will also note a whirlpool (no ship escapes) to the right.

Finally comes the island nearest to the reader on the left, best seen in the illustration on page 726. This also is wild and rocky; inhabited by Red Indians, whose tents, made by F. R. W. out of ordinary brown paper and adorned with chalk totems of a rude and characteristic kind, pour forth their fierce and well-armed inhabitants at the intimation of an invader. The rocks on this island, let me remark, have great mineral wealth. Among them are to be found not only sheets and veins of silver paper, but great nuggets of metal, obtained by the melting down of hopelessly broken soldiers in an iron spoon. Note, too, the peculiar and romantic shell beach of this country. It is an island of exceptional interest to the geologist and scientific explorer. The Indians, you observe, have domesticated one leaden and one wooden cow (see remarks above on the dearth of lead animals).

This is how the game would be set out. Then we build ships and explore these islands; but in these pictures the ships are represented

as already arriving. The ships are built out of our wooden bricks on flat keels made of two wooden pieces, of nine by four and a half inches, which are very convenient to push about over the floor. Captain G. P. W. is steaming into the bight between the eastern and western islands. He carries heavy guns; his ship bristles with an extremely aggressive soldiery, who appear to be blazing away for the mere love of the thing. (I suspect him of Imperialist intentions.) Captain F. R. W. is apparently at anchor between his northern and southern islands. His ship is of a slightly more pacific type. I note on his deck a lady and gentleman (of German origin) with a bag —two of our all-too-rare civilians. No doubt the bag contains samples and a small conversation-dictionary of the negroid dialects. (I think F. R. W. may turn out to be a Liberal.) Perhaps he will sail on and rescue the raided huts, perhaps he will land and build a jetty and begin mining among the rocks to fill his hold with silver. Perhaps the natives will kill and eat the gentleman with the bag. All that is for Captain F. R. W. to decide.

You see how the game goes on. We land and alter things, and build and re-arrange, and hoist paper flags on pins, and subjugate populations, and confer all the blessings of civilization upon these lands. We keep them going for days. And at last, as we begin to tire of them, comes the scrubbing-brush, —never. Another time it may be a wilderness, for example, and the boards are hills; and never a drop of water is to be found except for the lakes and rivers we may mark out in chalk. But after one example others are easy; and next I will tell you of our way of making towns.

III.

OF THE BUILDING OF CITIES.

We always build twin cities, like London and Westminster, or Budapest, because two of us always want, both of them, to be lord mayors and municipal councils, and it makes for local freedom and happiness to arrange it so; but when railways or tramways are involved we have our rails in common, and we have an excellent law that rails must be laid down and points kept open in such a manner that anyone feeling so disposed may send a through train from their own station back to their own station again, without needless negotiation or the personal invasion of anybody else's administrative area. It is an undesirable thing to have other people bulging over one's houses, standing in one's open spaces, and in extreme cases knocking down and even treading on one's citizens. It leads at times to explanations that are afterwards regretted.

We always have twin cities, or at the utmost stage of co-operation a city with two

From a] THE RAILWAY STATION AT BLUE END. *[Photograph*

and we must burn our trees and dismantle our islands and put our soldiers in the little nests of drawers, and stand the island boards up against the wall and put everything away. Then, perhaps, after a few days we begin upon some other such game, just as we feel disposed. But it is never quite the same game

wards, Red End and Blue End; we mark the boundaries very carefully, and our citizens have so much local patriotism (Mr. Chesterton will learn with pleasure) that they stray but rarely over that thin little streak of white that bounds their municipal allegiance. Sometimes we have an election for mayor;

it is like a census, but very abusive, and red always wins. Only citizens with two legs and at least one arm, and capable of standing up, may vote, and voters may poll on horseback; boy-scouts and women and children do not vote, though there is a vigorous agitation to remove these disabilities. Zulus and foreign-looking persons, such as Indian cavalry and Red Indians, are also disfranchised. So are riderless horses and camels; but the elephant has never attempted to vote on any occasion and does not seem to desire the privilege. It influences public opinion quite sufficiently as it is by nodding its head.

We have set out and I have photographed one of our cities, to illustrate more clearly the amusement of the game. Red End is to the reader's right, and includes most of the hill on which the town stands, a shady zoological garden, the town-hall, a railway tunnel through the hill, a museum (away in the extreme right-hand corner), a church, a rifle-range, and a shop. Blue End has the railway station, four or five shops, several homes, a public-house, and a thatched farm cottage close to the railway station. The boundary drawn by me as overlord (who also made the hills and tunnels and appointed the trees to grow) runs irregularly between the two shops nearest the cathedral, over the shoulder in front of the town-hall, and between the thatched farm and the rifle-range.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE TOWN, SHOWING THE INN AND THE SHOPPING QUARTER.
From a] [Photograph.

The nature of the hills I have already explained, and this time we have had no lakes or ornamental water. These are very easily made out of a piece of glass—the glass lid of a box, for example—upon silver paper. Such water in a corner becomes very readily populated by those celluloid seals and swans and ducks that are now so common. But on this occasion we have nothing of the kind, nor have we made use of a green-coloured tablecloth we sometimes use to drape our hills. Of course a large part of the fun of this game lies in the witty incorporation of all sorts of extraneous objects; but the incorporation must be witty, as you may soon convert the whole thing into an incoherent muddle-heap of half-good ideas.

I have taken two photographs, one to the right and one to the left of this agreeable place. I may perhaps adopt a kind of guide-book style in reviewing its principal features. I begin at the railway station. I have made a rather nearer and larger photograph of the railway station, which presents a diversified and entertaining scene to the incoming visitor. Porters (out of a box of porters) career here and there with the trucks and light luggage. Quite a number of our all-too-rare civilians parade the platform—two gentlemen, a lady, and a small but evil-looking child are particularly noticeable; and there is a penny wooden sailor with jointed legs, in a state of intoxication as reprehensible as it is nowadays happily rare. Two virtuous dogs regard his abandon with quiet scorn. The seat on which he sprawls is a broken piece of some toy whose nature I have long forgotten; the station clock is a similar fragment, and so is the metallic pillar which bears the name of the station. So many toys we find only become serviceable with a little smashing. There is an allegory in this—as Hawthorne used to write in his diary.

> What is he doing, the great god Pan,
> Down in the reeds by the river?

The fences at the ends of the platforms are pieces of wood belonging to the game of

Matador—that splendid and very educational construction game (hailing, I believe, from Hungary) which is slowly but surely making its way to the affections of English children. There is also, I regret to say, a blatant advertisement of Jabz's "Hair Colour," showing the hair. This is by G. P. W., who

ON THE HILL AT THE BACK STANDS THE TOWN-HALL, SURMOUNTED BY A STATUE OF A CHAMOIS, WHILE IN THE FOREGROUND A TRAIN IS SEEN EMERGING FROM THE TUNNEL.
From a Photograph.

seems marked out by destiny to be the advertisement-writer of the next generation. He spends much of his scanty leisure inventing and drawing advertisements of imaginary commodities. Oblivious to many happy, beautiful, and noble things in life, he goes about studying and imitating the literature of the hoardings and tube-lifts. He and his brother write newspapers almost entirely devoted to these annoying appeals. You will note, too, the placard at the mouth of the railway-tunnel urging the existence of Jinks's Soap upon the passing traveller. The oblong object on the placard represents, no doubt, a cake of this offensive and aggressive commodity. The zoological garden flaunts a placard, "Zoo, 1d. pay," and the greengrocer's picture of a cabbage with "Get them" is not to be ignored. F. R. W. is more like the London County Council in this respect, and prefers bare walls. You will, I hope, be able to read his notice on the inn: "£5 who sticks bills here."

"Returning to the station," as the guide-books say, and "giving one more glance" at the passengers who are waiting for the privilege of going round the circle in open trucks and returning in a prostrated condition to the station again, and "observing" what admirable platforms are made by our nine-by-four-and-a-half-inch pieces, we pass out to the left into the village street. A motor omnibus (a one-horse hospital cart in less progressive days) stands waiting for passengers; and, on our way to the Cherry Tree public-house, we remark two nurses, one in charge of a child with a plasticine head. The landlord of the inn is a small, grotesque figure of plaster; his sign is fastened on by a pin. No doubt the refreshment supplied here has an enviable reputation, to judge by the alacrity with which a number of riflemen move towards the door. The inn, by the by, like the station and some private houses, is roofed with stiff paper.

These stiff-paper roofs are one of our great inventions. We get thick, stiff paper at twopence a sheet, and cut it to the sizes we need. After the game is over we put these roofs inside one another and stick them into the bookshelves. The roof one folds and puts away will live to roof another day.

Proceeding on our way past the Cherry Tree, and resisting the cosy invitation of its portals, we come to the shopping quarter of

the town. The stock in the windows is made by hand out of plasticine. We note the meat and hams of "Mr. Woddy," the cabbages and carrots of "Tod and Brothers," the general activities of the Jokil Co. shopmen. It is *de rigueur* with our shop-assistants that they should wear white helmets. In the street boy-scouts go to and fro, a wagon clatters by; most of the adult population is about its business, and a red-coated band plays along the roadway. Contrast this animated scene with the mysteries of sea and forest, rock and whirlpool, in our previous game. Farther on is the big church or cathedral. It is built in an extremely debased Gothic style; it reminds us most of a church we once surveyed during a brief visit to Rotterdam on our way up the Rhine. A solitary boy-scout, mindful of the views of Lord Haldane, enters its high portal. Passing the cathedral, we continue to the museum. This museum is no empty boast; it contains mineral specimens, shells—such great shells as were found on the beaches of our previous game—the Titanic skulls of extinct rabbits and cats, and other such wonders. The slender curious a colossal statue of a chamois, the work of a Wengen artist. It is in two storeys, with a battlemented roof and a crypt (entrance to right of steps) used for the incarceration of offenders. It is occupied by the town guard, who wear Beefeater costumes of ancient origin."

Note the red parrot perched on the battlements; it lives tame in the zoological gardens and is of the same species as one we formerly observed in our archipelago. Note, too, the brisk cat-and-dog encounter below. Steps descend in wide flights down the hillside into Blue End. The two couchant lions, on either side of the steps, are in plasticine, and were executed by that versatile artist, who is also mayor of Red End, G. P. W. He is present. Our photographer has hit upon a happy moment in the history of this town, and a conference of the two mayors is going on, upon the terrace, before the palace. F. R. W., mayor of Blue End, stands on the steps in the costume of a British Admiral; G. P. W. is on horseback (his habits are equestrian) on the terrace. The town guard parades in their honour, and up the hill a

BY THE SIDE OF THE TOWN-HALL SOLDIERS ARE TO BE SEEN SHOOTING AT THE BUTTS.
From a Photograph.

may lie down on the floor and peer in at the windows.

"We now," says the guide-book, "retrace our steps to the shops, and then, turning to the left, ascend under the trees up the terraced hill on which stands the town-hall. This magnificent building is surmounted by number of blue-clad musicians ride on grey horses towards them.

Passing in front of the town-hall, and turning to the right, we approach the zoological gardens. Here we pass two of our civilians; a gentleman in black, a lady, and a large boy-scout, presumably their son. We enter the

gardens, which are protected by a bearded janitor, and remark at once a band of three performing dogs; who are, as the guide-book would say, "discoursing sweet music." In neither ward of the city does there seem to be the slightest restraint upon the use of musical instruments. It is no place for neurotic people.

The gardens contain the inevitable elephant, camels—which we breed, and which are, therefore, in considerable numbers—a sitting bear brought from last game's caves, goats from the same region, tamed, and now running loose in the garden, dwarf elephants, wooden nondescripts, and other rare creatures. The keepers wear a uniform not unlike that of railway guards and porters. We wander through the gardens, return, descend the hill by the school of musketry, where soldiers are to be seen shooting at the butts, pass through the paddock of the old thatched farm, and so return to the railway station; extremely gratified by all we have seen, and almost equally divided in our minds between the merits and attractiveness of either ward. A clockwork train comes clattering into the station, we take our places, somebody hoots or whistles for the engine (which can't), the signal is knocked over in the excitement of the moment, the train starts, and we "wave a long regretful farewell to the salubrious cheerfulness of Chamois City."

You see now how we set out and the spirit in which we set out our towns. It demands but the slightest exercise of the imagination to devise a hundred additions and variations of the scheme. You can make picture-galleries—great fun for small boys who can draw; you can make factories, you can plan out flower-gardens—which appeals very strongly to intelligent little girls; your town-hall may become a fortified castle. Or you may put the whole town on boards and make a Venice of it with ships and boats upon its canals, and bridges across them. We used to have some very serviceable ships of card-board with flat bottoms; and then we used to have a harbour, and the ships used to sail away to distant rooms, and even into the garden, and return with the most remarkable cargoes—loads of nasturtium-stem logs for example. We had sacks then, made of glove-fingers, and several toy cranes. I suppose we could find most of these again if we hunted for them. Once, with this game fresh in our minds, we went to see the docks, which struck us as just our old harbour game magnified.

"I say, daddy," said one of us, in a quiet corner, wistfully, as one who speaks knowingly against the probabilities of the case, and yet with a faint, thin hope, "couldn't we play just for a little with these sacks—until somebody comes?"

Of course, the setting-out of the city is half the game. Then you devise incidents. As I wanted to photograph the particular set-out for the purpose of illustrating this account, I took a larger share in the arrangement than I usually do. It was necessary to get everything into the picture, to ensure a light background that would throw up some of the trees, prevent too much overlapping, and things like that. When the photographing was over, matters became more normal. I left the schoolroom, and when I returned I found that the group of riflemen which had been converging on the public-house had been sharply recalled to duty, and were trotting in a disciplined, cheerless way towards the railway station. The elephant had escaped from the zoo into the Blue Ward, and was being marched along by a military patrol. The originally scattered boy-scouts were being paraded. G. P. W. had demolished the shop of the Jokil Company and was building a Red End station near the bend. The stock of the Jokil Company had passed into the hands of the adjacent storekeepers. Then the town-hall ceremonies came to an end, and the guard marched off. Then G. P. W. demolished the rifle-range, and ran a small branch of the urban railway up hill to the town-hall door and on into the zoological gardens. This was only the beginning of a period of enterprise in transit, a small railway boom. A number of halts of simple construction sprang up. There was much making of railway tickets, of a size that enabled passengers to stick their heads through the middle, and wear them as a Mexican does his blanket. Then a battery of artillery turned up in the High Street, and there was talk of fortifications. Suppose wild Indians were to turn up across the plains to the left, and attack the town! Fate still has toy drawers untouched. . . .

So things will go on until putting-away night on Friday. Then we shall pick up the roofs and shove them away among the books, return the clockwork engines very carefully to their boxes, for engines are fragile things, stow the soldiers and civilians and animals in their nests of drawers, burn the trees again—this time they are sweet-bay; and all the joys and sorrows and rivalries and successes of Blue End and Red End will pass, and follow Carthage and Nineveh, the empire of Aztec and Roman, the arts of Etruria and the palaces

of Crete, and the plannings and contrivings of innumerable myriads of children, into the limbo of games exhausted. . . . It may be, leaving some profit, in thoughts widened, in strengthened apprehensions. It may be, leaving nothing but a memory that dies.

IV.

FUNICULARS, MARBLE TOWERS, CASTLES, AND WAR GAMES, BUT VERY LITTLE OF WAR GAMES.

I HAVE now given two general types of floor game; but these are only just two samples of delightful and imagination-stirring variations that can be contrived out of the toys I have described. I will now glance rather more shortly at some other very good uses of the floor, the boards, the bricks, the soldiers, and the railway system—that pentagram for exorcising the evil spirit of dullness from the lives of little boys and girls. And first there is a kind of lark we call Funiculars. There are times when islands cease somehow to dazzle, and towns and cities are too orderly and uneventful and cramped for us, and we want something—something to whizz. Then we say: "Let us make a Funicular. Let us make a Funicular more than we have ever done. Let us make one to reach up to the table." We dispute whether it isn't a mountain railway we are after. The bare name is refreshing; it takes us back to that unforgettable time when we all went to Wengen, winding in and out and up and up the mountain-side—from slush to such snow and sunlight as we had never seen before. And we make a mountain railway. So far, we have never got it up to the table, but some day we will.

The peculiar joy of the mountain railway is that, if it is properly made, a loaded truck—not a toy engine; it is too rough a game for delicate, respectable engines—will career from top to bottom of the system and go this way and that as your cunningly-arranged points determine; and afterwards—and this is a wonderful and distinctive discovery—you can send it back by 'Lectric.

What is a 'Lectric? You may well ask. 'Lectrics were invented almost by accident, by one of us, to whom also the name is due. It came out of an accident to a toy engine; a toy engine that seemed done for, and that was yet full of life.

You know, perhaps, what a toy engine is like. It has the general appearance of a railway engine: funnels, buffers, cab, and so forth. All these are very elegant things, no doubt; but they do not make for lightness, they do not facilitate hill-climbing. Now, sometimes an engine gets its clockwork out of order, and then it is over and done for; but sometimes it is merely the outer semblance that is injured—the funnel bent, the body twisted. You remove the things, and behold! you have bare clockwork on wheels, an apparatus of almost malignant energy, soul without body, a kind of metallic rage. This it was that our junior member instantly knew for a 'Lectric, and loved from the moment of its stripping.

(I have, by the by, known a very serviceable little road 'Lectric made out of a clockwork mouse.)

Well, when we have got chairs and boxes and bricks, and graded our line skilfully and well, easing the descent and being very careful of the joining at the bends, for fear that the descending trucks and cars will jump the rails, we send down first an empty truck, then trucks loaded with bricks and lead soldiers, and then the 'Lectric; and then afterwards the sturdy 'Lectric hauls up the trucks again to the top, with a kind of savagery of purpose and a whizz that is extremely gratifying to us. We make points in these lines, we make them have level crossings at which collisions are always being just averted; the lines go over and under each other, and in and out of tunnels.

The marble tower, again, is a great building on which we devise devious slanting ways down which marbles run. I do not know why it is amusing to make a marble run down a long, intricate path, and dollop down steps, and come almost, but not quite, to a stop, and rush out of dark places and across little bridges of card. It is, and we often do it.

Castles are done with bricks and cardboard turrets and a portcullis of card, and drawbridge and moats; they are a mere special sort of city-building, done because we have a box of men in armour. We could reconstruct all sorts of historical periods if the toy-soldier makers would provide us with people. But at present, as I have already complained, they make scarcely anything but contemporary fighting men. And of the war game I must either write volumes or nothing. For the present let it be nothing. I set out merely to tell of the ordinary joys of playing with the floor, and to gird improvingly and usefully at toymakers. So much I think I have done. If one parent or one uncle buys the wiselier for me, I shall not altogether have lived in vain.

[We shall be pleased to receive any photographs of Floor Games of this kind devised by our readers, and to publish and pay for such as may prove suitable.]

JUDITH LEE.

By RICHARD MARSH. Illustrated by J. R. Skelton.

V.—The Miracle.

EOPLE sometimes say that they envy me because, with my power of reading thoughts —that, they say, is what it comes to—I must have so many opportunities of doing people good. It must be so sweet, they add, with what I occasionally feel to be an irritating smirk, to be able, with very little trouble to oneself, to benefit one's fellow-creatures. That sort of remark is very easy to make, but it is not easy to benefit one's fellow-creatures. And as for doing people good, it is surprising how many people would rather not be done good to. Take that case of what happened at Dieppe.

I was spending my summer holidays at Dieppe. I had been there about a fortnight. One evening I was sitting, all alone by myself, on the terrace outside the Casino. I had been dancing; my partner had gone to fulfil another engagement, and, as I was not engaged for that dance, I had asked him to leave me where I was. I was taking my ease in a long chair close to the sea-wall. In front of me, in the glow of the electric light, people were seated at little tables having refreshments. At one of these was a gentleman whose name I knew, talking to one who was to me a complete stranger.

The first gentleman's name was Armitage —Cecil Armitage. He was an amazingly handsome young man, perhaps in the late twenties. He was staying in my hotel, and was the cause of no little amusement to some of the other visitors. He, a young man of seven or eight and twenty, evidently of birth and breeding, was paying the most marked attention to a woman who was one of the greatest jokes in Dieppe—Miss Drawbridge.

Miss Drawbridge, commonly known as "Gertrude" to people who had never spoken to her in their lives, was a sort of standing dish at Dieppe. She was supposed to have been there longer than the oldest inhabitant; she had certainly been a frequenter for quite a number of years. What I had seen of her I rather liked. She was staying at my hotel, and there was a time when she had asked me to share her table; and, although that time had passed and she never asked me to share it now, we were still on quite good terms. She was certainly a curious person—people who haunt the same foreign watering-place year after year generally are; and what an extremely presentable young man like Cecil Armitage could see in her was a mystery—unless it was her money

Imagine the sensation which stirred the air when it became known that this perfect Adonis was engaged to "Gertrude." Had not Miss Drawbridge announced the fact herself, I fancy few people would have believed it. And the things which were said of Miss Drawbridge, especially by some of the women! The men just sneered.

There was I on the terrace, in my long chair (I could say things about men, but I think I had better get on with my story), and there was Mr. Armitage, drinking what looked to me very like absinthe—fancy drinking absinthe at that time of night, or, so far as that goes, at any time!—and talking to a perfect stranger. Of course, the man was quite entitled to be a stranger; but I have seldom seen a man whose looks I liked less. The contrast between him and Mr. Armitage was amazing. He was a sallow, hatchet-faced man, with an upturned moustache —which I hate!—and something the matter with one of his eyes which made him seem to be looking in two directions at once. Nor did I like his manner towards Mr. Armitage; he seemed to me to be positively bullying him. That was one reason why I watched what they said, and some very surprising observations—I cannot say I heard—I saw. And, as always is the case on such occasions, I could not have gained a more intimate acquaintance with them had they bawled them in my ear.

The first thing I saw was the stranger's thin lips contorting themselves as, in what I imagined to be an angry undertone, they formed these words, which I have no doubt, judging from the expression of his face, he snapped out at Mr. Armitage as if he were an angry terrier :—

Copyright, 1911, by Richard Marsh.

"Don't you make any mistake about it, my boy. I've not come over to Dieppe to be fooled with. I'm either going to have you or the money in four-and-twenty hours. If I have to have you, it will be penal servitude, and then the smile will come off that pretty face of yours."

Mr. Armitage was not smiling at that particular moment, as anyone could see; on the contrary, he looked very much disturbed. The way in which he leaned across the table helped me to realize the earnestness which I felt sure was in his voice as he replied to the other's threat, in words which, as I saw each fresh one shaped on his lips, surprised me more and more.

"Don't be absurd, Clarke. I can't perform the impossible. I can't get it in four-and-twenty hours; but you shall have your money, with a thumping interest, if you will only give me reasonable time."

"And pray, what do you call reasonable time, my beautiful—forger?"

"It won't take very much to make me break this glass against your face, Clarke. You may have the whip-hand of me, but I'll break your neck before you get a chance of laying the lash across my back."

I held my breath, expecting every moment to see something dreadful happen. The way Mr. Clarke snarled back at him!

"That's the tone you take, is it? You talk to me like that again, and I'll have you jailed to-night. Do you think you can both rob and murder me? I say you're a forger—forger—forger! Now you touch me with a glass, or anything else, if you dare. This will be the last time you ever show yourself in a decent place if you do."

There was a pause. Mr. Armitage leaned so far forward that I quite expected that he would take the other by the throat and strike him with his glass. I was just on the point of jumping up and doing something which would divert his attention, when he seemed all at once to change his purpose, and, leaning right back, positively laughed.

"What nonsense it is, Clarke, our talking like this. You'll do no more good by calling me names than I should do by knocking you down. I tell you again, you shall have your money, with thumping interest, if you'll wait."

"I know a good deal about you, my lad—about all there is to learn—but I don't know where you're going to get anything like that amount of money from, unless you've found someone else to rob."

I thought Mr. Armitage would resent this remark as he had done the others, and I believe that for a moment it was his intention to do so, but again he changed his purpose, and I saw these remarkable words come from his lips instead:—

"I have—I've found a woman."

It was not strange that Mr. Clarke looked at him as if he wondered if he was in earnest; then he asked, with a smile which made him an even more unpleasant-looking person than before:—

"What woman have you found this time?"

"If you are suggesting, as you appear to be, that I ever have robbed a woman up to now, I can only inform you, Clarke, with all possible courtesy, that you are a liar. I have not always treated women well—few men have; but no woman has ever suffered in pocket because of me up to the present time of speaking."

"That's between you and your conscience. Who is the woman you purpose, according to your own statement, to rob, at the eleventh hour?"

"It's the woman I intend to make my wife."

"Oh, so there is a woman you're going to make your wife—at last. What about——" I do not know what he was going to say; Mr. Armitage stopped him so suddenly, and positively shook his fist in his face.

"Stop that, Clarke; don't you mention any names. You keep your tongue between your teeth. I'm going to marry the woman I'm going to marry because I'm a thief, and because I'm such a cur that I shrink from paying the penalty. She's a wretched old fool who comes all to pieces; Heaven knows what's left of her when the various aids to beauty are put away for the night; but she's got money, and she's willing to give me money, enough to be rid of you and save myself from the treadmill. That's why I'm going to enter the bonds of holy matrimony, and that's a perfectly frank confession; franker, I dare-say, than most men make in similar circumstances."

"This sounds as if it were going to be a marriage of real affection; a genuine love-match." The sneer which was on Mr. Clarke's face as he said this; the indescribable look which was on Mr. Armitage's as he replied:—

"If you only knew how I hate the woman; how every pulse throbs with loathing when she comes near me." He gave what seemed to me to be a great sigh. "As I live, it's a comfort to say that to someone. It makes me ill to be in the same room with her—got to that stage already. Heaven knows how

"YOU MAY HAVE THE WHIP-HAND OF ME, BUT I'LL BREAK YOUR NECK BEFORE YOU GET A CHANCE OF LAYING THE LASH ACROSS MY BACK."

far it will go by the time we're married. I shouldn't wonder if I were to murder her on our wedding night."

"Is that so really? What a honeymoon you'll have if you do. Is the lady young?"

"Young! I shouldn't care to ask her age for fear of the depth of the lie she'd tell me; she's at least old enough to be my mother—my grandmother, for all the woman that's left in her."

"What a very charming couple you will make—full of vivacity! Has the lady physical charm?"

"She never had. I tell you she takes all to pieces nowadays. She is one of those women the ladies' papers always suggest to the masculine mind; she gets her hair from one of the persons advertised on the back pages; her complexion from some wretched harridan whose advertisement is to be found a page or two in front; her figure from a person the editor specially recommends—at so much a time; and her teeth from the Lord knows who. Oh, she's a regular specimen of love's young dream."

"Is she really? She must be a walking nightmare. What is the fortunate lady's name? I take it she has tons of money."

"Her name is Drawbridge, and she has, at any rate, enough money to pay you, Clarke."

"I hope there will be a little left for you when I am paid, I do really, my dear boy."

"Well, there may be or there mayn't; but I'm marrying her to get the money to pay you, and that's the whole, plain truth."

Mr. Armitage was about to rise from his chair when the other leaned right over the table and stopped him.

"One moment, Armitage, one moment. When are you going to touch that money, eh?"

"I can't tell you the exact day now, can I? I only proposed to her yesterday. It was your telegram that brought me to the sticking-point."

"I'm afraid I shall have to push you a little beyond the sticking-point. I'm in a hole myself. I'm pressed for money. I've got to find at least five hundred pounds in four-and-twenty hours."

"Is that true?"

"Perfectly true. I shall be in a very inconvenient position if I don't find it; and it's got to come from you. You'll be in a more inconvenient position than I shall if it doesn't; so that's plain. I've come all the way to Dieppe to make it clear to you that it is plain. Can you get five hundred pounds out of your fair lady between this and to-morrow night? If you can I'll wait a few days for the rest, but five hundred I've got to have before I go to bed to-morrow night; or—you know the alternative if I don't. That engagement will be off; I don't suppose even she will want to marry you after you've done a term of penal servitude. There's something else—I should like a hundred to-night."

"I haven't ten pounds left in the world. I'm practically broke; I've been losing steadily ever since I've been at this place."

"Then it looks as if you'll have to get a hundred for me and a bit over for yourself. I've got to have my hundred, and the other four to-morrow."

Mr. Armitage, looking steadily at the other, seemed to see something in his face which made it clear that he meant what he said. A grim look came on his own face as I saw him say: "I'll see what I can do."

"You'd better. Where is the lady?"

"Punting, in the club; playing baccarat."

"Then you'd better cut off to the club as fast as ever you can, and take her by the scruff of the neck and squeeze that hundred out of her while she's got it to squeeze. After you're married you're not going to let her play baccarat with your money, are you? She'll make a pauper of you if you don't take care."

"You mind your own business, and leave me to manage my matrimonial affairs after my own fashion." Mr. Armitage got up from his chair. "Where shall I find you, at the hotel or here?"

"You'll find me all over the place, my lad, don't you make any mistake. I'm not going to lose sight of you till I've got my money, or got you in jail. You can go, but just you understand I shall be close behind you—and I'm not the only one who'll be close behind you either. If you keep looking over your shoulder you'll see two or three—friends of mine."

Mr. Armitage took himself off, with an air of indifference which was very well done; he could not have had a very careless feeling in his heart. Almost immediately Mr. Clarke followed with the evident intention of dogging his steps. And I was left alone, nearly overcome by feelings which were altogether indescribable.

What on earth was I to do? It was no business of mine, this affair of the old maid and the young bachelor. She must have known what a risk she was running when she agreed to his preposterous proposal. If, by what I will call an accident, I had become acquainted with facts which made the gentleman's position in the matter abundantly clear—still it was no concern of mine.

But it was no use my talking to myself like that. I could not allow a person of my own sex to enter into what I knew would be such a hideous marriage without making some attempt to lay before her the facts upon which my knowledge was based. In other words, here was one of those opportunities for doing good of which people were so fond of talking; and, if the thing was in my power, good should be done.

I got up from my seat and went in search of Miss Drawbridge; finding her, as I had expected, in that part of the building which is found in every French casino, and which—I presume ironically—is called "Cercle privé," as if it ever is, in any sense of the word, a "club," or has anything "private" about it. She was seated at one of the baccarat tables, and I could see at a glance that she was winning; she had quite a quantity of bank-notes in front of her, and kept adding to the store. Presently the bank was closed and the players rose. Miss Drawbridge rose too, with her spoils in a white satin handbag. As she moved towards the door Mr. Armitage came into the room, with Mr. Clarke not very far behind him. When he accosted her, I thought, as I suppose everyone else did in the room, what an extraordinary couple they were—to think that they were ever going to be married. I saw him ask her, with an attempt at a smile:—

"Well, what luck? How many banks have you broken?"

Her back was towards me, so that I could not see her answer, but I guessed what it was from his rejoinder.

"That's great news." I fancy he hesitated. Would he have the assurance to ask for that hundred pounds for Mr. Clarke without a moment's warning? He approached the subject by what I suppose he meant to

be a delicate way. "I'm awfully glad you've had a bit of luck, because the fact is it's all the other way with me; I can't do anything right, and, between ourselves——" I saw him hesitate again; I imagine that the decent man which was in him made it difficult for him to ask a woman for money when it came to the pinch.

What she said I could not see, but I conceive of her as saying, struck by his hesitation: "Well, and what is it between ourselves?"

He made a stumbling effort to explain what it was he wanted.

"You know, it's like this: I'm awfully pushed for coin. If you could manage to lend me, say, a hundred out of those winnings of yours——"

She cut him short. I could not tell with what words, but her hand dived into her white satin bag just as they passed through the swing-door out of sight.

Two or three minutes afterwards, when I returned to the Casino, I saw in the crowd round the "little horses" Mr. Clarke sidle up to Mr. Armitage. Both their faces were in plain sight. I could see Mr. Clarke ask:—

"Well, have you got it? Has the sweet young thing been kind?"

Mr. Armitage turned away, as if the other's gibe had roused him to sudden anger; but I saw him hand his companion something as he moved away, and I knew what it was. A few minutes later I saw Mr. Armitage again, going towards the club. He was addressed by a fat, florid-looking man, with an exaggerated moustache. A moustache sometimes screens a man's mouth almost completely; but his was so formed that, despite the absurd dimensions of that hirsute adornment, I could see his lips distinctly. He said to the man he had stopped, with what I fancied was an evil gleam in his bold, blood-shot eyes:

"I'm sure Mr. Armitage has a five-pound note which he can spare for an old friend who's a little on his uppers."

Mr. Armitage recognized him with what was evidently not a start of satisfaction.

"So it's you, Morgan, is it? What on earth are you doing here? I thought you were——"

Mr. Morgan raised his finger to his lips, to prevent the other bringing his sentence to a close.

"Quite so—we won't say where. How about a five-pound note, Mr. Armitage, for a very old friend?"

Mr. Armitage looked at him angrily for a few seconds, then grabbed something out of the pocket of his dinner-jacket which might have been a hundred-franc note. He thrust it into the other's hand and, without waiting for a word of thanks, went quickly on. Mr. Morgan looked at what he had been given, then he looked after the donor—the expression on his face was not that of a grateful man.

I found Miss Drawbridge sitting at the very table on the terrace which had been lately occupied by Mr. Armitage and his friend. As I took the chair in front of her she said to me:—

"That's right, come and talk to me—and have something." She herself was having some curious concoction in a big glass; for me she ordered a lemon-squash. "I've had a good night, my dear. It seems as if I can't lose at baccarat lately—as if my luck had turned; I'm sure it's about time it should. You look a little moped. What's been troubling you?"

I considered for a second or so; then I decided, by degrees, to make the plunge. I approached the subject by what I meant to be a roundabout fashion of my own.

"I've just learnt something rather disagreeable."

"Have you? That's easy; the difficulty is to learn anything else. Is it private, or for publication?"

"I've just learnt that a man who I thought was rather a decent sort is a thief and a rogue, and two or three other things which are rather worse."

"When you've had my experience of life, my dear—which Heaven forbid you ever will—you'll know that that sort of thing is quite common with a man—you must take a man at his own valuation, my dear. We should never get one at all if we took them at ours."

"This man is not only going to marry a woman for her money, but because he doesn't know where he will get money from if he can't from her, and if he doesn't get her money at the earliest possible moment he'll be sent to jail. He's a thoroughly all-round bad lot, the man is, though he doesn't look it."

Miss Drawbridge had her fish-like eyes—they always looked as if they had been boiled—fixed on me with a watery stare.

"What's the gentleman's name?" I knew from her manner that, as the children have it in their game, she was "getting warm." "Does it begin with the first letter of the alphabet?"

"I'm afraid it does."

"What have you found out about Mr.

Armitage? Stay—before you speak I ought to tell you that what you say will in all probability be repeated to him; and while I'm about it I ought, perhaps, to tell you something else—and that is not a very easy something to say."

She sipped at her glass; then she took a cigarette out of a gold case and began to smoke. I thought what an extremely unprepossessing person she seemed. I wondered

"YOU DON'T THINK I'M VERY MUCH TO LOOK AT, DO YOU?"

by what process of evolution a sweet, simple, fresh, clean young girl had become transformed into such a being. Rather to my surprise, and a good deal to my confusion, she showed an unexpected capacity to read my thoughts.

"You don't think I'm very much to look at, do you? I'm not; I never was. Time has not improved me, either outside or in. When I was young I was very poor. For seven years I was a governess at sometimes twenty, sometimes thirty pounds a year, and lived upon my earnings—if you know what that means. I couldn't expect to get married on that, could I? And no one wanted me anyhow, though I wanted to marry very badly. I never remember the time when the one thing of which I dreamed was not to become some decent man's wife. It sounds funny, doesn't it? Isn't it a shocking confession to make? I wonder how many women would make it if they told the truth?"

She flicked the ash from her cigarette. I was beginning to wish that I had left her alone, that I had not embraced an opportunity of doing her good.

"When I was about thirty-eight I came into a lot of money from an uncle, whom I don't remember to have ever seen. It turned my head; I thought that money could do anything. I decided that now I would marry, and that I would marry just the sort of man I had always hoped I would do. You see, I had practically no knowledge of the world at all—how can a woman have who has lived a life like mine? It took seven or eight years to make it clear to me that, in thinking because I had got money I could marry the sort of man I wanted to, I was a fool."

She smiled, and the whole of her face seemed to be dislocated to enable her to do so, and she beckoned the waiter to fill her glass.

"Men wanted to marry me—oh, yes; but they were the kind of men whom I would not, as the saying is, have touched with the end of a barge-pole. I sent them about their business. Whenever I saw a masculine creature to whose appearance I particularly objected, I knew that, sooner or later, he would ask me to be his wife—which was nice.

No one else ever did, so I made a fool of myself by way of seeking consolation. I know they call me 'Gertrude' here, and some equally silly name at other places which I favour regularly with my society. As a matter of fact, my name is Elizabeth. Since my mother died, when I was a girl, no one has ever called me by my Christian name—think of that!"

The waiter brought her a fresh edition of that curious concoction; she put the glass to her lips.

"Don't suppose that my desire to marry grew less as my years grew more; that's a silly notion which some young girls seem to have. If I have to advertise for a husband, I'm going to have one before I die; so you can imagine what it means to me that Cecil Armitage has asked me to be his wife. I don't know that I'm particularly fond of him; I'm quite aware that he isn't at all fond of me. But he's so young—you don't know what a young man means to a woman like me—and so handsome, so beautiful, so healthy, so strong, so well shaped! In my most sanguine moments I never dreamed that I should have such a perfect specimen of a man for my very own. Of course, I shall have to pay for him—you needn't tell me that; my experience is that one always has to pay for anything that's worth having—and generally through the nose. I expect to have to pay through the nose for him. I've got more money than some people think, or, I believe, even than he suspects. I believe he thinks that I've got two or three thousand a year; I'm a rich woman, my dear. My money has gone on increasing and increasing, and now I don't spend a tenth of my income. I don't mean to let him know how much money I really have; he'd want too much if I did. I don't suppose for a moment that he isn't what I've seen described as 'shop soiled'; he wouldn't want to get money out of me at the price of making me his wife if he wasn't in a nasty hole. And, bless you, I don't mind that; I've grown out of all my illusions. You can tell me all you know against him if you like, though I don't know how you found out; it will give me a pull over him when it comes to talking matters over a little later on. Nothing you can tell me to his discredit will surprise or hurt me in the least. I'm prepared to pay a good lump sum to get him clear of all his messes, then I'm going to have one of the finest weddings ever seen in town; I've had a special sum set apart for it for years. Won't he make a picture of a bridegroom? I never dreamed that I should marry a man like him."

Her cigarette being nearly consumed, she lit another, while I looked at her with, I have no doubt, amazement in my eyes and something like terror in my heart. I had never supposed that there were such women as she existing in the world, who looked at what, to me, were sacred things from such a point of view. It seemed to me that I was listening to someone in a nightmare when she went on.

"There will be crowds of people at my wedding; you can always get crowds of people if you don't care what it costs to get them. And the papers will be full of it; the ladies' papers send their own lady reporters to weddings, and give pages and pages, and lots of illustrations, if you make it worth their while. It's all a question of making it worth their while. I tell you that with such a bridegroom I'm going to have the wedding of the season; and I do believe you thought you were going to choke me off him by telling me that he is what you call a thief. You funny little thing! How many really honest men do you suppose there are, if the truth were known?"

I had nightmares because of Miss Drawbridge that night—real nightmares. I had a broken and disturbed night absolutely on her account, and I got out of bed with the feeling strong upon me that, if I could possibly help it, that, to my mind, impossible marriage should not take place—I would do that unfortunate woman good in spite of herself.

When I got down almost the first person I saw was Mr. Cecil Amitage, looking so glum, so unhappy, so desperate, and, I could not but think, so ashamed of himself, that my resolution was strengthened—particularly when, as I was having my coffee and roll, the man Morgan, with the huge moustache, came and planted himself at my table, and actually began to talk to me.

"I rather fancy, Miss Lee, that you are interested—shall I say?—in our mutual friend Armitage?"

He seemed to have got my name off pat, though where he had got it from I could not think; how he dared to address me I could not think either. I had never seen the man except the night before in the Casino for about thirty seconds—and then at a distance. I did not answer him, I just looked at him; he went on:—

"I may mention that I am Captain Morgan, of the Fusiliers." I think it was the Fusiliers, I know it was some regiment—as if I cared. "I'm an old friend of Mr. Armitage, and if

you like I can place you in possession of certain facts concerning that gentleman——"

I did not wait for him to finish. I got up and walked off, leaving my coffee and roll unfinished. I daresay if I had stopped to finish them he would have offered to sell me secrets about Mr. Armitage for five pounds apiece. I had an instinctive feeling that he was that kind of man.

It is quite the thing at Dieppe to go down to the quay to see the boat come in from Newhaven. After *déjeuner*, as there was a pretty stormy sea, I thought I would go and see what the passengers looked like. As I was going I fell in with Mrs. Curtis, one of the dearest old ladies I have ever met. She was an American, and, so far as I could make out, had been doing Europe very much on her own, although she had a husband who everybody said was a millionaire. It seemed that he was coming to Dieppe by that very boat.

"I haven't seen him," she told me, "for more than six months. He's so occupied with business that he hasn't time to spare for such a trifle as a wife, except between whiles. I understand that he's been making another million dollars. I wish he wouldn't; every fresh million he makes only seems to fill him with the desire to make more; and as we've neither kith nor kin, and are just a lonely old couple, what we're going to do with all the money I can't think."

It was a funny thing to say, but then people do say funny things, and there are such funny people, and so much of the world does seem queer. A few people have too much money and so many have nothing like enough—it's all a jumble.

When the boat drew up at the quay she began to wave her handkerchief with all her might to an elderly gentleman who stood on the deck, and he began to wave his to her; so I drew off in order that they might meet without being worried by a stranger. As I was strolling off the quay after most of the people had gone, a girl who had a small brown bag in her hand looked at me as if she wondered if I were very dreadful, and then, as if thinking that perhaps I was not, summoned up courage to speak to me.

"Can you tell me," she asked, "the name of a cheap and respectable hotel where—where I can go alone?"

I told her of one which I thought answered that description—I offered to show her where it was. She was quite the prettiest girl I had seen for ages, with a face, I thought, which had character and strength, as well as being good to look at. I fell in love with her at sight. She did not accept my offer to show her to the hotel, but she thanked me for giving her the name; and then, after favouring me with a further inspection, she made a remark which took me aback.

"I believe that in these foreign places, if they have been there any time, English people begin to know each other by name as well as by sight. Will you pardon my asking how long you've been here?" I told her. Then came a staggering question: "Can you tell me if there is now staying in Dieppe a gentleman named Cecil Armitage?"

I informed her that to the best of my knowledge and belief there certainly was. I do not know what there was in my tone which she resented, but there seemed to be something; because, barely thanking me, she gave me a cold little nod and walked on.

That evening, after dinner, I was sitting in the Casino gardens, when I saw a fragment of conversation between Mrs. Curtis and her newly-returned husband which both amazed and tickled me. I may say at once that, unless I blindfold myself, whether I want to or not I cannot help seeing what people are saying whenever I look out of my eyes. I was rather in the shadow, and they were in the full glare of the electric light, so that I could not help seeing them. The old lady was speaking when I saw them first.

"So you've been making more money?" she said; and as she said it she looked at her husband rather severely.

"I've been making a pile, Elinor; a regular pile. I wish money wasn't so easy to make, or that I hadn't the knack of making it."

As he said it, he looked to me as if he groaned. In spite of the severe expression on the old lady's face I daresay there was a twinkle in her eye.

"And what are you going to do with it now you've made it?"

"I'm hanged if I know—I'll be bothered if I do. It's of no use to me; and I suppose it's of no use to you, is it?"

"None whatever. I've all the money I'm ever likely to need and rather more; it's piling up at the bank as it is, so that I'm ashamed to look my bank-book in the face, there's such a lot of it. I wonder you can't find some better occupation for your time than making money when you've got more than you want already."

The old gentleman, bending towards her, took her hand in his. I could see how his face softened as he touched her, and how hers softened too.

"I tell you what I should like to do with

some of that last money I've been making—I'd like to do someone a good turn. Do you think it would be easy? I don't mean just give it away to the first Tom, Dick, or Harry who thinks he wants it—there are plenty of them. You don't happen to know of a man, woman, or child to whom a certain amount of money would mean the difference between heaven and hell? There must be such people in the world somewhere. Wouldn't you like to set some fellow, who wasn't quite a bad one, on his

"'SO YOU'VE BEEN MAKING MORE MONEY?' SHE SAID; AND AS SHE SAID IT SHE LOOKED AT HER HUSBAND RATHER SEVERELY."

legs, or give some woman, who was very much in need of it, happiness—if money could do it?"

She did not answer, but I fancy she pressed the hand which was holding hers, and I stole off. I did not dare to stay longer for fear I really should be intruding.

I walked as far away from them as I could get, to the other end of the terrace, where I was a witness of quite a different scene. There was Mr. Armitage, standing close up against the sea-wall, looking out across the night-black sea; and somehow his attitude told me that it could not be blacker than his mood. I paused a little distance from him and sat on the wall itself. I wondered how long he would stay. I did not wish to intrude—I had nearly been intruding at the other end—but I did not wish to go; I had a right to be somewhere. After a while he turned, and I thought he was going; then out of the darkness there came—I knew no more than he did from where—the figure of a woman. When she saw him she stopped, and he stopped also. There was a lamp close to the sea-wall which let me see their faces, and how, at the sight of each other, they changed. Then I saw each pair of lips form at the same moment a Christian name—"Cecil!" "Margery!" and in an instant they were in each other's arms. I had to stop and look at them, because this was the girl I had met on the quay, to whom I had

lost my heart. They were silent for quite a perceptible period, as if each was content to know that the other was there. Then, as he held her at arms' length, I saw him ask her :—

"Margery, how do you come to be here?"

And I saw her answer, with the light of love all over her :—

"I came for you."

"For me? Good God!" The hands which had held her fell to his sides; he seemed to stagger as if he had been dealt a blow. "Margery, you shouldn't have come."

"I had to come; I couldn't help coming; I couldn't stay away. I thought you might want me."

"Want you? As if there's ever likely to be a time when I don't want you! I was half beside myself for want of you then." She moved forward; he put up his hands as if to stop her. "You mustn't, you mustn't." He drew himself a little more erect. "Margery, I'm going to be married."

There was a look on her face as if she were bracing herself to bear.

"Is that true? Is it quite, quite certain that you're going to be married?"

"It's either that or jail."

"You are sure—perfectly sure?"

"Absolutely. Clarke is here; he wants his money; he'll take a warrant out if he doesn't get it soon. I can only get it from—her."

There was such an accent on the pronoun—I knew it from the look which was on his face. I could see she winced.

"I know; I've heard all about her. I don't know what to advise you to do. You know you will be committing a great sin—if you marry her." I noticed that both parties seemed to avoid mentioning her name. "I know you, Cecil, your weakness and your strength. I do not think you will ever cease to love me."

"I am as sure of that as that you and I are standing here; it's the only thing of which I am sure. You are part and parcel of my life, of my very being."

"That being so, do you think you ought to marry—her, even to save yourself?"

"It's not only to save myself—it's to save you. If I don't marry her I shall be sent to jail—there's no alternative. Then, when I come out, as likely as not I shall marry you."

"Well—what then?" The smile which lighted up her face was one which, my instinct told me, only comes to the woman who holds the world well lost for love. Her question made him flame into anger.

"What then? Everything then! Margery, you sha'n't marry a jail-bird—you shall not. If I'm to be branded as a felon, I'll never carry on the brand to you, and to our children—never, never. As God is my witness, you shall not be a felon's wife. So the thing resolves itself into this: If I don't marry this woman I shall become a jail-bird—Clarke will make me one; then—you'll be such a temptation to me, Margery. I've been tempted once and I've fallen, but what was that temptation compared to you? I'll not dare to risk it. So it's good-bye, Margery. I've no right to kiss you; the mere thought of your lips against mine drives me mad. I'm going—I'm going to marry that woman—and I'm going to her now."

And apparently he went—he positively ran. And the girl never turned even to follow him with her eyes, but remained stock still where he had left her; then did as he had done—looked out across the night-black sea.

I sat still and watched her till I could bear it no longer; then I went to her and said :—

"Will you come with me, please, while I speak to some friends?" She glanced at me as she might have done at a ghost; I do not think she quite realized that I was a creature of flesh and blood. So I reached out and took her by the hand and said to her again: "I—I think I can help you if you'll come with me while I speak to some friends."

She did not utter a sound, or try to. I think her heart was broken. She just let me take her by the hand and lead her where I would; she moved as if she were a docile child. I saw, in the distance, that Mr. and Mrs. Curtis were still where I had left them; so I placed her on a chair within sight, and I said, as if I had been speaking to a child :—

"Sit there, please, and don't move; in a few minutes I hope I'll be able to come to you again with some good news."

She sat down with meek and heart-rending obedience—she was such a picture of misery I could have cried; but I bore up till I got to Mr. and Mrs. Curtis, even though I believe there was something moist in the corners of my eyes. I got to the heart of my subject without any sort of preamble.

"You know, Mrs. Curtis, I told you that I was a teacher of the deaf and dumb, and that I could tell what people are saying by watching their lips?"

"Of course you did, my dear. This is my husband, who has just come to me from New York City. Fred, this is Miss Judith Lee, of whom I was speaking to you. She's a very

wonderful young woman, and I hope she's going to be my very dear friend."

I did not wait for Mr. Curtis to speak; I just went on. I could see he was beginning to look at me with a sort of wonder.

"I just saw you and Mr. Curtis talking, and I saw him say to you that with some of the money he had just been making he would like to set some fellow, who wasn't quite a bad one, on his legs, and give some woman, who was very much in need of it, happiness. Well, I know just such a pair, and if he meant it I can give him a chance of doing, right now, exactly what he said he wanted to do."

They looked at me, and they looked at each other, which I did not wonder at—I was so hot and eager, so very much in earnest. With that girl sitting there, right in my line of vision, I felt that I had got to take these people's hearts by storm; and I was not going to stick at a trifle in doing it. Mr. Curtis asked, with something in his voice which made me wonder if he was quizzing me, but I did not care if he was:—

"Who are your deserving couple, Miss Lee?"

Then I told them all about it, in just as few words as I could, and as close to the point as I could get them. It did me good to see how quick he was at getting at my meaning. I had heard a deal about American quickness; I saw an example of it then. I believe that before I had finished he understood it all—just got at what I wanted him to get. The quizzical note was still in his voice when he made what, from an Englishman, would have seemed a simply amazing speech, but which seemed to come quite naturally from him.

"If fifty thousand dollars—that is, ten thousand pounds sterling—would do for this lady and gentleman what you want to do, you can have the cash to-night, on one condition, Miss Lee—that you don't say from whom it comes. You're to regard that as your secret and mine."

In about three minutes I went tearing off after Mr. Armitage. I found him sitting at

"AND I BORE THAT YOUNG MAN RIGHT PAST HIM."

a table in a corner of the restaurant, a suspicious-looking glass in front of him and a most dismal expression on his face. Just as I reached him I saw Mr. Clarke coming in at the other end, but I paid no attention to him.

"Mr. Armitage, I want you to come with me at once, on business which is to you almost a matter of life and death."

He looked at me as if amazed, which was not odd. I fancy I seemed pretty excited, and my acquaintance with him was of the slightest. But I gave him no chance to talk. Almost before he knew it, I was sailing down the room with him at my side. We encountered Mr. Clarke, who tried to stop us.

"Armitage, there's something which I've got to say to you."

I gave him no chance either.

"Then you'll have to have something. Mr. Armitage has business which won't permit of an instant's delay."

And I bore that young man right past him. I daresay they both of them thought I was mad. I was conscious that Mr. Clarke was looking after us as if he would like to bite me, but did not dare; he did not even dare to try to speak to Mr. Armitage again. I believe Mr. Armitage did ask some questions, but he got no answers; I took him at such a pace to my hotel that he had not time to ask many. I had arranged with Mrs. Curtis that she should carry off the girl to her private sitting-room. As I opened the door, with the young gentleman in tow, she came out, and she slipped into my hand what I knew to be a wad of notes. Then I showed Mr. Armitage into the room, and when he saw the girl and the girl saw him their faces were a study.

Off I went, without any preamble, as hard as I could to the point.

"I have no time to waste in explanations—at least, not now; I merely want you to understand that owing to circumstances over which I have practically no control I know all about you—and that's all. I believe, Mr. Armitage, that you have some regard for this young lady, whose name I don't happen to know, except that it's Margery. Is it correct that you have a regard for her?"

The bewildered look with which that young man regarded me, as if he wondered if something had happened to the foundations of the world!

"I have only the pleasure of knowing you very slightly, Miss Lee; I'm afraid I don't understand——"

I stopped the flow of his eloquence with a wave of my hand.

"We shall be able to talk about all that later. In the meanwhile, may I ask you to inform me if you have a regard for this young lady? You'll find it worth your while to say just 'Yes' or 'No.' I know you are supposed to be engaged to Miss Drawbridge, but that doesn't matter. Will you please answer my question?"

"I don't know what use you intend to make of the information, but I have no objection, since you appear to know already, to telling you that Miss Stainer is dearer to me than anything else in the world."

"I knew it, but I preferred to get the fact from you. Without thrusting myself too much upon your confidence, may I ask, Miss Stainer—I should prefer to call you Margery, but as it seems your name is Stainer——"

"Please call me Margery," she murmured—just murmured; I could see the words better than I could hear them.

"May I ask, Margery, if you have in the least degree any feeling of the same kind for Mr. Armitage?"

She did not answer—she looked at me. I don't know what she saw on my face, but she seemed to see something which induced her to draw close and take my right hand in both of hers, and—that was all; but I understood; as I immediately made clear.

"That being the case, it is evidently desirable that you should be married at the earliest possible moment"—you should have seen their faces—"and a friend has placed funds at my disposal which will enable you to do so. Please don't speak, not yet. Mr. Armitage, you've been doing something disgraceful; I'm ashamed of you. How much do you owe that man Clarke?"

That bewildered look on his face was increasing; he seemed all eyes.

"How do you know I owe him anything? Has he been telling you?"

"He has not; and I'm the only one who is to ask questions. You can ask all you like later on, but at present please content yourself with answering mine. How much money do you owe that objectionable Clarke person?"

"It was eight hundred, but now he makes it out to be a thousand."

I did not ask what hold the man had over him, not out loud; but I daresay the question was formulated in my brain. I cannot explain how it was, but I seemed to see the answer in his eyes, or somewhere: "He's got a forged acceptance." And it gave me such cold shivers down my back that I went hurrying on.

"Mr. Clarke will be paid his thousand pounds; and you will sit down at that table and write on that sheet of paper a list of the moneys you owe; they will all be paid—out of the fund which I have at my disposal. Now, do not ask questions, but do as you're told. Yes, it is a miracle if you like to think it so, it's the miracle which is going to be the making of you. Now, sit down and write."

He sat down and wrote; it took him some minutes. A young gentleman cannot be expected to set down all he owes in an instant; I daresay there were omissions in that list of his when it was finished, though it came to a nice little total as it was.

"That's a very great deal of money," I told him when I glanced at it. "Nearly three thousand pounds. It's dreadful that a young man who is practically penniless should owe all that. If, by a miraculous interposition, it is paid, is this sort of thing going to recur? Wait before you answer. You will leave Dieppe to-night, by the boat which starts at half-past one. Miss Stainer will leave also, in charge of a lady who is a very dear friend of mine. You will go to London, there you will obtain a marriage licence, and the day after to-morrow, which will be Thursday, you will be married."

"Oh!" Margery gasped; I had to put an arm round her waist to hold her steady.

"You will book two berths by the boat which starts for New York on Saturday. On your arrival there employment will be found for you, and you will be provided with funds which will enable you to live until your salary falls due. The future will be in your own hands. Live decently, keep out of debt, work like an honest man should do who has given hostages to fortune, and there's no reason I know of why you shouldn't be the happiest couple in the world—because you are starting with a very valuable capital, your love for each other. Now, Margery, you're not to do that."

The girl, having come close up to me, had laid her head against my breast and was crying. I had to comfort her.

"Now, my dear, you must keep your head; you mustn't give way; there are heaps of things you must do. To-morrow you must buy your trousseau, and all sorts of things you will have to have; and—now, Margery, if you will keep on crying you'll make me cry too, you will—and I won't."

And I did not cry; I never do. I look upon crying as an absurd feminine weakness; and if I did, it was nothing to speak of.

Everything happened as I intended. They left by the early morning boat—Mr. Armitage was so shame-faced. He was still bewildered; even as the boat was starting I believe he had a sort of feeling that his brains were addled. Mrs. Curtis shared a cabin with the girl. And Mr. Curtis stayed behind with me.

The next morning I interviewed Mr. Clarke. I sent for him to Mr. Curtis's sitting-room, and he came. Mr. Curtis was present to see that everything was fair. I began at the visitor before his nose was well inside the door—I did have such an objection to the man.

"Mr. Clarke, I presume you're aware that you have placed yourself in a very serious position?"

He glared at me as if he wondered who I was; then he looked at Mr. Curtis, and perhaps that kept him from saying some of the things he would have liked to say.

"You have in your pocket a forged bill of acceptance which you received, well knowing it to be forged, and which you have used for the purpose of extorting blackmail. I need not tell a person of your experience that by so doing you have placed yourself within the reach of the criminal law."

He began to bluster.

"Who the deuce are you, and what do you mean by talking to me like this?"

"Mr. Armitage has instructed me to act on his behalf." I laid some notes on the table. "There is the money he owes you You'll give me the bill you hold and a quittance in full of all the claims you have against him."

The man made quite a pretty little scene—or, rather, he tried to; because a few remarks from Mr. Curtis brought him to before he had really got under weigh. When he left that room he had got his money, and I had the bill and the quittance and everything I wanted. Then I interviewed Miss Drawbridge.

I found her in the courtyard of the hotel having what she called her aperitive. As always, I came to the point with her at once.

"Miss Drawbridge, Mr. Armitage wishes me to tell you that the engagement which he entered into with you is at an end. As you made it clear to me that there was no sentiment about the matter, I am sure you will excuse my treating it as a business proposition—which is off."

She did not seem to mind my talking to her like that in the very least. She was a most extraordinary woman. Instead of my taking her aback, she took me.

"That's all right. I've been turning matters over in my mind, and I think myself

that it would be better to cut the loss. Between ourselves, I've almost decided to marry Captain Morgan. He's a gentleman I've known for some considerable period. Every time I meet him he asks me to marry him, and I think, on the whole, he will suit me better than Cecil Armitage; he's more my sort."

I believe my breath failed me. The rapidity with which she adjusted herself to fresh matrimonial prospects was a trifle startling. I saw that the person whom she called Captain Morgan was coming out of the hotel.

"WHO THE DEUCE ARE YOU, AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY TALKING TO ME LIKE THIS?"

"You were so kind as to lend Mr. Armitage a hundred and fifty pounds, which he returns, and for which he thanks you. I think you'll find that correct."

I laid a hundred and fifty pounds in bank-notes on the table and tore off. Captain Morgan was within a yard or two.

I left with Mr. Curtis by the afternoon boat for London. The next day that affectionate pair were married. Mr. Curtis gave the bride away, and I was her bridesmaid. Afterwards we had quite a festive time with Mr. and Mrs. Curtis. On the Saturday Cecil and Margery sailed. I doubt if they had realized the situation even then. I believe they still thought it was a miracle—and it was.

It was a miracle which materialized and, if I may mix my metaphors—and I shall if I choose—bore fruit and flourished. Mr. Curtis, that miracle-worker, gave Cecil a post in his own business—a small one at first, but which rapidly grew in importance. Cecil Armitage proved himself to be an excellent man of affairs; hard-headed, shrewd Mr. Curtis both trusts and likes him. Margery wrote to me only the other day that she and Cecil were the happiest pair in the United States of America. That seems a tall order; I hope there are lots of couples who are as happy as they are—but they are happy.

The same mail brought me a letter from Mrs. Curtis. She said she hoped to see me before very long with a husband of my own. She never, never will. Never, never, never!

Charlie's Pantomime.

By Leonard Larkin

Illustrated by

J. A. Shepherd

IT was really the cat, Charlie was convinced, that had caused all the trouble, but the cook *would* put it down to his pup, in the perverse way of all grown-up people. When he had no pup all sorts of misdeeds were blamed on the cat, by all the cooks he could ever remember. The cat smashed plates, lost spoons, spilt coals on the stairs, and stole ribbons out of work-baskets. So that it would seem to have been settled beforehand from immemorial time that the cat must have eaten the sausages provided to accompany the Christmas turkey. On any other of the few Christmas Eves within Charlie's recollection the cat would have been found guilty without leaving the box, so to speak; but now, just because somebody had given him a puppy, the cat had suddenly become a pattern of virtue and the felony of the sausages was ascribed to the puppy, on what Charlie considered wholly insufficient evidence. All through the few days since he had come home from school that cook had regarded the pup with an unfavourable eye; and now he was assured that the turkey must be eaten sausageless because of his pet's dishonesty. It was the next thing to a reflection on himself.

It was late in the evening and there was a great stir (of pudding) in the kitchen. Nobody could be spared to go out after more sausages, and even if they could the shops were probably shut. Charlie laboured under a strong sense of injustice, and brooded over his wrongs and his puppy. He knew what it would be, he said. His Christmas dinner would be spoiled, partly by the absence of the sausages, but chiefly by the constant reproaches directed at him and his puppy. Even the promised pantomime would be rendered a bitterness.

Charlie did his brooding before a fine large fire in the dining-room, and the pup—as yet unnamed—blinked placidly, with his nose resting on the low fender. In the midst of the broodings an idea struck Charlie—he would confound and astonish the cook, and, indeed, all the household, by a stroke of heroism. The cook had said he would have no sausages unless he got them himself; he would go and get them himself.

It was dark and cold and windy, and there was snow on the roof. It meant finding his boots, which was a nuisance, and putting them on, which was another; but real heroism should not quail before trials like

these, and Charlie's proved equal to the test. He put on boots, coat, and neck-wrap, and passed so easily and quickly out at the usually heavy and creaky front door that he mildly astonished himself. The streets were quiet in general, though he could hear, now and again, the distant grunt of waits with trombones.

He floated easily down the front steps and went along the street. The tall policeman at the corner turned his lantern on him as he passed, and he was oddly reminded of the light-house with its moving light, that had grown familiar in his last holidays in the summer; so that presently when he looked back it did not surprise him in the least to see the policeman solemnly revolving on his own axis and sweeping his light in a wide circle as he did it.

"THE DOOR WAS OPENED BY A VERY LARGE GANDER."

Charlie's destination was the poulterer's and fishmonger's shop a street or two off. He had seen it earlier in the day with its gaily-rosetted rows of prize turkeys and its tassels of game. It was probably shut by now, and he was not at all sure that he remembered seeing sausages, but all such things were matters of unimportant detail before Charlie's ruthless determination. Sausages he would get—out of a stone if necessary.

The shop *was* shut; and the skylight of the adjoining door grinned at him slyly. The knocker was friendly, however, and after playfully retreating once or twice toward the skylight came low enough for him to seize it and knock.

He was prepared with apologies to the poulterer for knocking him up at such a time, but the apologies died on his lips when the door was opened, not by the poulterer, but by a very large gander.

"P-pluh! Ga-a-ach!" shouted the gander; "and what d'*you* want?"

"Sausages," replied Charlie.

"*What?*" demanded the gander.

"Sausages—sir," Charlie repeated, very respectfully.

"Spell it," said the gander.

"S-a-u-s-a-g-e-s," said Charlie, very slowly and distinctly.

"'ORDERS EXECUTED WITH PROMPTITUDE AND DISPATCH,' SAID THE STURGEON."

"S-a-u—saw, s-a-g-e-s—sages," said the gander. "Well, where?"

"Where?" queried Charlie, a little bewildered.

"Yes; where did you see 'em?" said the

gander, sharply. "You said you saw 'em, you know. The sages."

"No; I said I *wanted* some sausages," Charlie expostulated.

"*Wanted some saw sages!*" repeated the gander. "Parse that sentence if you can! But, there—nobody pays any attention to what *I* say, and I suppose you're like the rest of 'em. I'm only the door-porter. You'd better go in and see the manager—be careful of the executioner as you go!"

"CERTAINLY, SIR, CERTAINLY. THIS WAY, SIR. THERE'S THE BOX-OFFICE."

A chill struck Charlie in the dark shop as he passed a huge block of ice and perceived standing over it a very enormous creature leaning on an axe. It was a sturgeon—Charlie remembered to have seen one displayed before this very shop in his last holidays.

"Orders executed with promptitude and dispatch," said the sturgeon. "Executioner always on duty; heads of families specially attended to. Are you a head?" he asked politely, feeling the edge of his axe.

"Oh, no, sir; nothing of the kind," said Charlie, hurrying past greatly disturbed. "I'm going to see the manager."

"Manager?" said a large, harsh voice at his elbow. "Oh, gobble-gobble, gargle-gargle! Everybody wants to see the manager. What is it now?"

Charlie had retreated backward from the executioner, and now turned to face the largest prize turkey he had ever seen, blue rosette and all.

"Come, come," said the turkey. "Gobble-gobble! I'm the manager. What d'you want?"

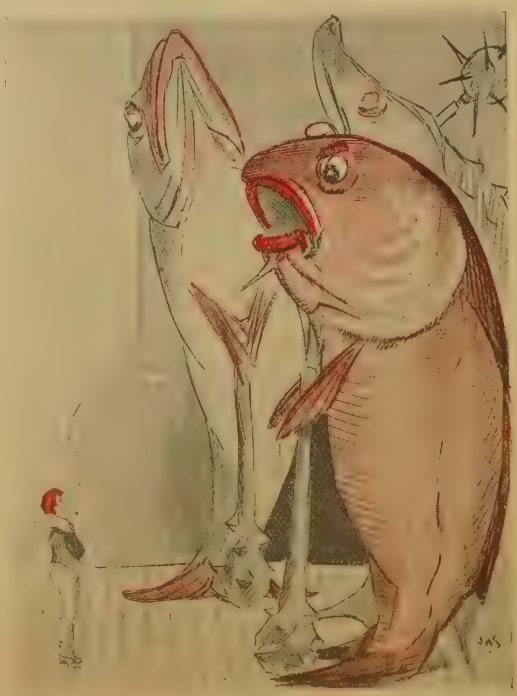
It suddenly struck Charlie with a shock of dismay that it would never do to ask a turkey for sausages. It would be much too grossly personal—like requesting a lamb to pass the mint-sauce, or asking a duck if it liked sage-and-onion stuffing.

"I've no vacancies," said the turkey, observing his hesitation. "Not one. The company's all engaged long ago—been rehearsing for weeks. *You* don't know much about the profession if you come after a shop in pantomime on Christmas Eve!"

"I don't want a shop," began Charlie, a little bewildered; "at least, not *all* the shop. I'm just a customer, you know."

"Oh, bookings!" exclaimed the turkey, with a sudden bow and an expansive smile. "Certainly, sir, certainly. This way, sir. I misunderstood. There's the box-office."

He stepped aside and waved his wing, and Charlie perceived that he was directed toward the shop pay-box, where the young lady takes the money. The box was very dark inside, so Charlie tip-toed and put his



"'IF YOU PLEASE,' SPOKE UP CHARLIE TO THE NEAREST COD, 'I WANT SOME SAUSAGES.'"

head as far in as he could before whispering, "Please I want some sausages!"

"Some *what?*" came a hoarse whisper from the depths.

"Sausages," repeated Charlie, in another whisper.

"Oh, dear me!" came the hoarse whisper again, this time with a tearful accent. "Here's something else I

"A VERY LARGE FOWL, BEARING ALOFT A TROPHY INSCRIBED, 'POULTRY IS CHEAP TO-DAY.'"

"THE POLICEMAN PULLED OUT HIS NOTE-BOOK AND BEGAN TO SCRIBBLE FURIOUSLY."

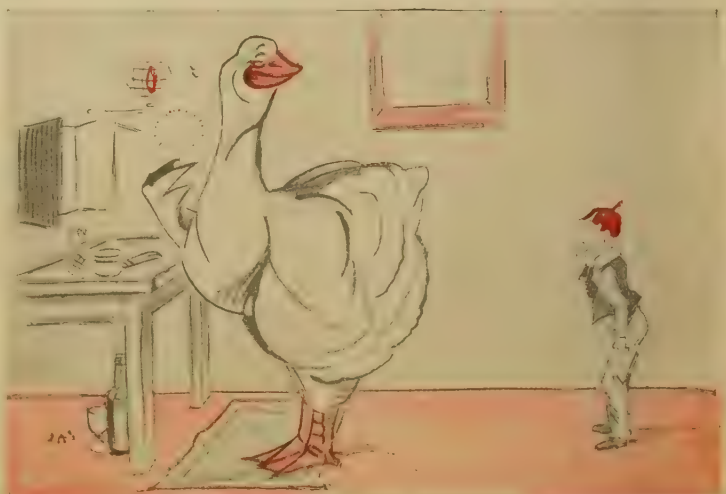
I didn't understand *him*. He thought I wanted a 'shop in a pantomime.' What's that?"

"Well," came the answer, "this is a pantomime in a shop, which *sounds* very much the same thing. But *I* dunno. I dunno about. Don't give me away!"

"I can't see you," said Charlie.

"Never mind; I'm only an oyster. They said I was no good on the stage, even in the back row, so they put me in the box-office. I don't understand it a bit, and I'd rather be in bed with the other oysters; but the manager's such a tyrant — such a Turkey—that I don't dare complain. Can't you ask him?"

"I didn't like to," answered Charlie. "And



"'SAUSAGES!' MURMURED CHARLIE ONCE MORE, HOPELESSLY."

"A ROW OF MEN-AT-ARMS—LOBSTERS—CAME MARCHING PAST."

ain't used to this business at all—I wasn't brought up to it. I'm goin' to pass everybody in on the nod, whatever they do to me; it's the simplest way. *You* go in on the nod and ask somebody else—go on. Go and ask the call-boy whatever it is you want. He's

"A HIGHLY-DRILLED PROCESSION OF COCK-PHEASANTS."

been brought up to it—I haven't. Go on—go in on the nod."

"On the nod?" asked Charlie. "How's that?"

"Oh, *I* dunno!" wailed the oyster again. "*I* dunno; but it's what they say here. Nod at everybody you see, and go in—that ought to be right!"

Charlie took a glance at the turkey, but its back was turned. So he nodded hurriedly and dived in at a door close by the pay-box—a door where it seemed much lighter.

It *was* lighter. All sorts of lights were flitting and dodging about overhead, and a row of them, upright, stood just inside the door. Charlie looked about for somebody to nod to, but saw nothing for a time but the lights. Then he saw something small and bright on the floor scarcely a yard away, and began nodding at it vigorously, for it was a sprat.

The sprat nodded back cheerfully, and said "Whatho!" in a small but very shrill voice. "How did *you* get in?" he added, twisting himself on his tail to look up.

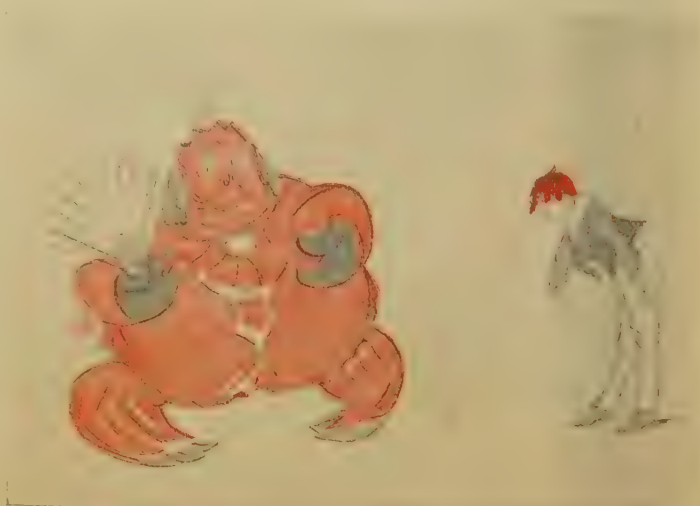
"On the nod," answered Charlie. "Like this, you see," and he nodded furiously. "I want some sausages. I don't see any about here, though."

"Of course not," said the sprat; "it ain't likely there would be any when *I* don't know what they are, with *my* experience of the profession. Years and years and years and years!" he went on, lifting his eyebrows—"ever since I was quite little!"

"What! Ever since then?" replied Charlie, with a chuckle, stooping low to look at the sprat.

"All right," the sprat answered, indignantly; "I know what you mean. You're like the others—you think I *am* little. You forget I'm the call-boy! Here, you seem to like big people—go and worry the giants waiting to go on there in the wings—go on!"

Charlie resumed his pilgrimage, and now perceived that he was really behind the scenes of a theatre, and that all signs of the fishmonger's shop had vanished, except the stock, which was walking about in the liveliest possible manner. The giants whom the sprat had indicated were lounging near



"CHARLIE BOWED POLITELY AND OFFERED HIS ARM."

the wriggly edges of some tall scenery, and they were quite the largest fish he had ever seen. One was a cod, certainly, and so was another—unless it were a hake—and a third was the executioner from the front shop, though now minus his axe and block. Charlie drew near, and, not forgetting the advice of the oyster in the box-office, nodded vigorously at all of them.

"If you please," spoke up Charlie to the nearest cod, "I want some sausages."

"Sausages," said the cod, nudging his neighbour. "D'ye hear? He wants some sausages."

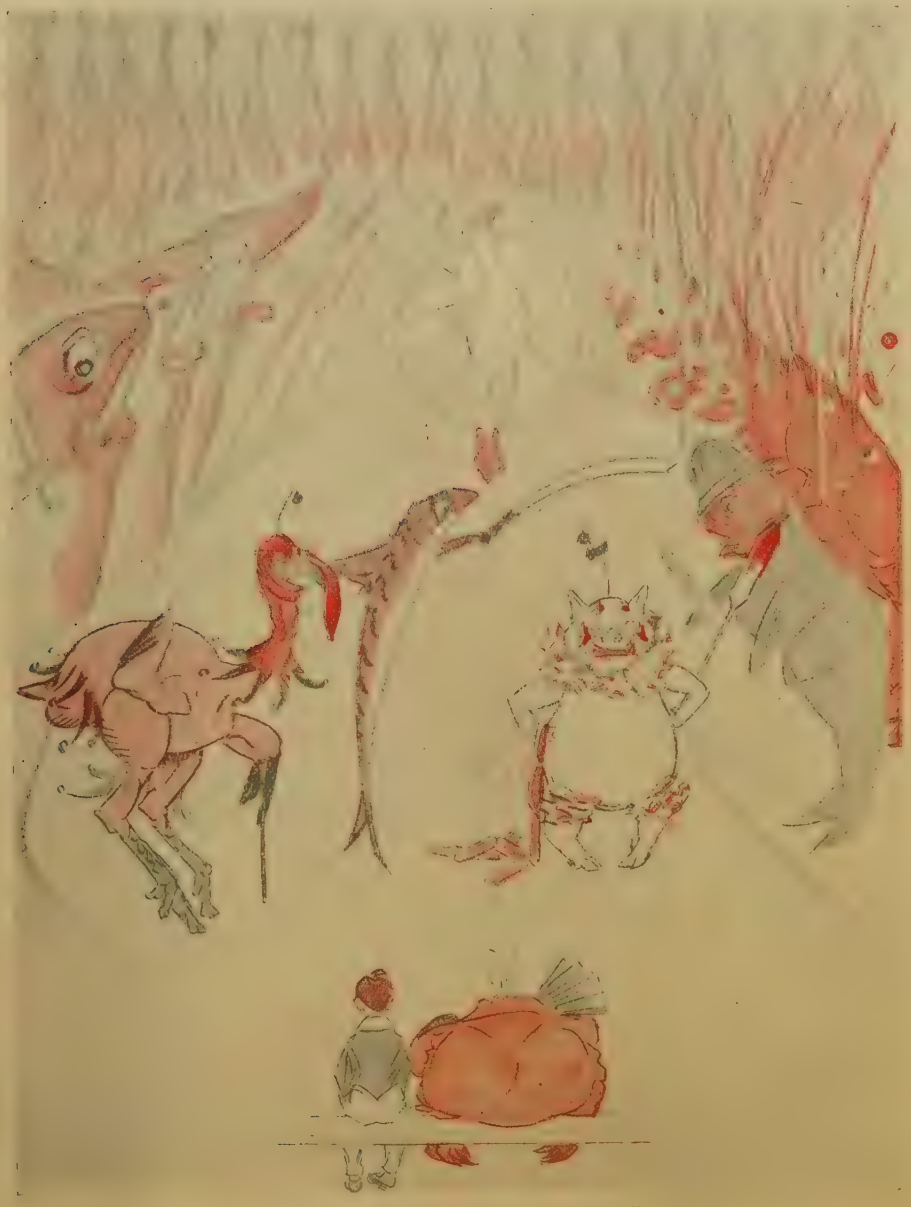
"All right," said the neighbour, nudging the third giant. "I say, he wants some sausages. See about it."

"Oh, sausages?" repeated the sturgeon. "Well, I think *you* ought to see about that."

"Yes, so you ought," said the cod to the hake.

"No, he means *you*," said the hake to the cod; "and I agree with him."

"I don't believe you know what they are,"



"HA, HA! HERE WE ARE AGAIN!"

said the cod, "and you're afraid of exposing your ignorance."

"I'm quite sure you don't know what they are," said the hake, "but you won't let on."

"I don't think either of you knows," said the sturgeon, "and you're just bluffing each other."

"'I WANT THOSE SAUSAGES!' CRIED CHARLIE."

"Come to that," said the cod, "I don't believe you know yourself. What *are* they?"

And then they looked at each other very hard.

"Everybody knows about sausages," said the cod, after an awkward pause; "they're in a Christmas song:—

> The mistletoe hung in the castle hall,
> The sausages shone on the old oak wall;

and so on, you know."

"Yes, and so on, of course," added the hake, looking hard at Charlie and waving him away with his fin.

"Yes, so *on*," said the sturgeon, waving his fin too. "So *on*," he repeated, "now that we've told you all about sausages, and enlightened your brutal ignorance."

"They're humbugs," thought Charlie. "Most of these overgrown creatures are. I shall have to ask somebody else."

He wandered disconsolately about the scenery, and began wondering vaguely why he had come to a theatre to get sausages. It certainly looked like a poulterer's from outside, but, of course, there was no reason why a poulterer shouldn't have private theatricals on Christmas Eve if he liked. And certainly some things were vastly like a poulterer's shop even now. Charlie dodged an acrobatic practising whiting, which came hurtling along like a hoop, with its tail in its mouth, and presently met a very large, tough, and sulky-looking old fowl, plucked and bony and blue about the wattles, bearing aloft a trophy inscribed, "Poultry is cheap to-day."

Charlie thought he would make a little conversation this time, before approaching the subject of sausages. So he said, "Good evening. Are you in the pantomime?"

"Ah, you may well ask, me friend," said the old fowl. "You may well be surprised to see the depths to which the legitimate drama has fallen! Beshrew me, 'tis a sorry world! To think that I, whose Ma-acbeth was the talk of Leadenhall Market, should be left alone to carry this miserable banner in—panto!"

"I'm sorry you're left alone," said Charlie.

"I suppose you were—ah"—he didn't like to say "unsold"—"not engaged while the shop was open?"

"Terew, me friend—'tis too terew! Genius is passed over and plumpness is preferred. Such is the way of the wor-r-rld! A naughty wor-r-rld, by my halibut!"

"Perhaps," insinuated Charlie, "with all your experience, you can tell me if there are any sausages here."

"Sausages?" said the tragedian, with an extra haughty stretch of his scraggy neck. "Sausages? 'Tis a vulgar article of food with which I have nothing to do. Me friend, I cannot converse on sausages. I refer you to the policeman there. Sausages, indeed!"

There certainly *was* a policeman a little way off, but on a closer examination he proved to be only another codfish. This did not look promising; but Charlie was getting desperate, and he knew that in London everybody in a difficulty went to a policeman. So he stepped up and said, "Good evening, inspector. Can you direct me to the sausages?"

The policeman instantly pulled out his note-book and began to scribble furiously. "S-o-s-s-i-j-e-s-e-s-e-s," he murmured, as he wrote. Then he stopped suddenly and pointed his pencil at Charlie. "How many 'esses' in 'sausageses'?" he demanded, peremptorily.

"I don't think 'sausageses' is the proper word," Charlie observed, mildly.

"Then you don't know your poetry," replied the policeman.

"Let dogs delight to bark, and bite
The ends off sausageses;
But brandy balls are my delight,
As large as Cheshire cheeses.
Bow, wow, wow!
Right fol torooraliddy, bow, wow, wow!

"I wrote some of that," he added, complacently; "the rest is Shakespeare. Pass along, there—pass along!"

He looked so suddenly aggressive that Charlie passed along as quickly as he could. As he did so he brushed against a very fat, motherly old goose, who was powdering herself before a glass. He stopped and apologized very humbly when he saw she was the columbine.

"Lord bless the boy, *I* don't mind," she said, with a wide smile. "You ain't hurt me. Was you looking for anyone?"

"Sausages!" murmured Charlie once more, hopelessly.

"Sausages! Oh, yes, you'll see 'em if you watch. They ain't got exactly what you might call a part, but you'll see 'em. Put on a mask or something in case the manager sees you, and look for my dear old friend the crab. She's a perfect lady, and quite a leader of fashion. Dress! Well, of course, she's celebrated for that. You've heard of Dressed Crab, haven't you? Well, that's her. I promised I'd find a young man to take her down to her stall; so look out for her and you're bound to see the sausages. Ta-ta!"

And with that the goose joined the harlequin—a mackerel—in the wings.

The whole place began to buzz with activity. A row of men-at-arms—lobsters—came marching past, with a prawn leading them, and then a highly-drilled procession of cock-pheasants, followed by ranks of red-legged partridges; and there was a procession of plump pullets, followed by another of jugged hares, each with its nice little jug in its paw. Charlie tried one or two masks—a boar's head and a cod's head—but he could see nothing with them on, and all sorts of performers kept running against him. He was just taking off the cod's head when he felt a pinch on his arm, and behold! there was the Dressed Crab, a most highly ornamented lady with a fan. So Charlie bowed very politely and offered his arm.

They walked through a door and pushed aside a curtain, and with a burst of light the great transformation scene was before them. The manager was acting himself—as pantaloon. There was the mackerel, and there were the goose and the cod, and all the rest of them, and even now Charlie could not be *quite* certain that it was really a pantomime, and not a gorgeously-stocked poulterer's shop-front. Rows of pheasants, processions of hares, ranks of partridges, all were there; and suddenly in the midst of it all there came the merry shout:—

"*Ha, ha! Here we are again!*"

And the clown—a sucking-pig—burst on the stage with a red-hot poker in one hand, and in the other a string of

SAUSAGES!

Charlie forgot all about the Dressed Crab and began to make for the stage.

"Order! Order, there! Turn him out!" came angry shouts. "Sit down there!" And somebody began to pull him back.

"I want those sausages!" cried Charlie, at the top of his voice.

"All right," said his father, hauling him gently up from the hearthrug; "you shall have them. They've come while you've been asleep. They forgot to send them sooner, that's all, and cook thought they'd come this morning."

From a Photograph by Apeda Studio, New York.

Stories I Have Heard and Told.

By MARSHALL P. WILDER.

Illustrated by E. Blampied.

It was the late Clement Scott who once described Marshall P. Wilder, the American humorist, as the "world's drollest dwarf." The secret of his success as a humorist is easily explained. To quote his own words, "Dame Nature appeared out of sorts when she got hold of me. She put a couple of feet under me, but she left a couple of feet off my stature. After a while Dame Nature took another look and seemed to think that she hadn't done the fair thing by me, so she gave me an expansive smile and a big laugh." And Marshall P. Wilder has been cultivating that expansive smile and big laugh ever since. He has laughed his way through life, always living "on the sunny side of the street."

LIFE'S very much what you make it. Think of joy, happiness, and laughter, and it is pretty apt to come your way. There's always something to laugh at, even if it is only yourself. I have been laughing at myself for years.

I was giving my entertainment at a little township out West, when a nigger with a dog came to me and said :—

"You Mr. Wilder ?"

"Yes."

"I would like to see your show to-night, but I have got no money. Will you give me a ticket in exchange for the dog ?"

"Go right along in," I said, "and take your dog with you. You are very welcome."

I met him again after the show.

"Well," I said, "how did you like it ?"

"Glad I kept my dog," was the laconic reply.

In my perambulations round the world however, I don't think I ever met a man more fond of telling a story against himself than Chauncey Mitchell Depew, who, of course, has an international reputation as a story teller. He can tell a new story every day of the year and add two or three by way of good measure. His great art, however, lies in making his stories applicable to the circumstances of the moment, and he is so able to do this sort of thing that he can turn a story

against the man who tells it. But he confesses gleefully to having been caught in the same manner. He was billed to make a speech somewhere, and when he arrived the editor of the local paper called at his hotel to argue politics with him. The editor quoted newspaper statements frequently to support his arguments, but Depew replied :—

"Oh, you can't believe everything the newspapers say."

After the speech-making ended, the editor and Mr. Depew met again in the centre of a crowd of listeners.

"Well, my friend," the genial Chauncey asked. "What did you think of my speech?"

The editor hesitated a moment before he inquired, solemnly: "Are you the genuine Chauncey M. Depew?"

"Certainly! Do you doubt it?"

Again the editor hesitated. He regarded the speaker as if he were sizing him up, and asked: "Are you the man all the newspapers have been saying is the finest speaker, the greatest talker, the sharpest stumper, and the brightest wit before the public?"

Depew modestly blushed at this array of compliments; but replied, "I guess I am. But why do you ask?"

"Oh, because you can't believe everything the newspapers say."

And Depew made haste to shake hands with the editor and call it square.

MARSHALL P. WILDER.
From a Photograph by Apeda Studio, New York.

Mark Twain was equally fond of telling a story against himself, and I think the one which tickled me most is a tale of juvenile woe which Mark related to me some years ago. I had asked Mark if he could remember the first money he had ever earned.

"Yes," he said. "It was at school, and a very painful recollection it is, too. There was a rule in our school that any boy marking his desk, either with pencil or knife, would be chastised publicly before the whole school or pay a fine of five dollars. Besides the rule there was a ruler; I knew it because I had felt it; it was a darned hard one, too.

"One day I had to tell my father that I had broken the rule and had to pay a fine or take a public whipping, and he said :—

"'Sam, it would be too bad to have the name of Clemens disgraced before the whole school, so I'll pay the fine. But I don't want you to lose anything, so come upstairs.' I went upstairs with father, and came down with a bad feeling and the five dollars, and decided that as I had been punished once and got used to it, I wouldn't mind taking the other licking at school. So I did, and kept the five dollars. That was the first money I ever earned."

I don't think any man more appreciated a funny story, or more quickly saw the point, than the late King Edward. I had many opportunities of judging his sense of humour, for I appeared before him frequently during his lifetime. In fact, I really owe my English reputation to King Edward's laugh. When I first came to London, more years ago now than I care to remember, circumstances were such that I lived in a little back room in Tottenham Court Road. It was so small that I found living in that room made me narrow-minded; so I stayed out in the park several nights to give myself room, as well as to air my repertoire. Through the influence of a friend, whose kindness I shall never forget, I was introduced to the Savage Club. I had the freedom of the Savage at all times and was allowed to have my letters addressed there—a privilege which literally saved my face. And what a genial, kind-hearted set of fellows the members were! If they noticed the straits I was in they never betrayed the knowledge, and their dinner invitations often saved my slender banking account from extinction. It was through the Savage that I had the good fortune to be put on a list of entertainers at an affair given for the Gordon Home for Boys. King Edward and Queen Alexandra, then, of course, Prince and Princess of Wales, were present. I was very nervous, but as I walked on the stage the Prince looked at me right in the eye, for I was very close to him, and with a half challenging smile seemed to say, "Now my American cousin, if it is in you, go in and win. I'll help you!"

I started with an imitation, entirely by facial impression, of a man who has received a letter from his wife. He expects, of course, that she wants money. He opens the letter

and discovers she doesn't, but that his dear, dear mother-in-law is ill; then he comes to a postscript saying that she is quite well again. The whole story is told in pantomime. Well, it wasn't a very new idea, but it caught the fancy of the Prince, and he burst into a very whole-hearted and democratic roar. This one event launched me on my London career, for the very next morning I had fifteen engagements.

The King seemed very surprised at my small stature, and there are other people, too, who have been surprised.

Referring again for a moment to King Edward, I might mention that one of the stories he seemed to appreciate most was that which I related to him about a man who had a habit of walking in his sleep. One night he got up and wandered about the streets, until met by a policeman, who shook him, saying :—

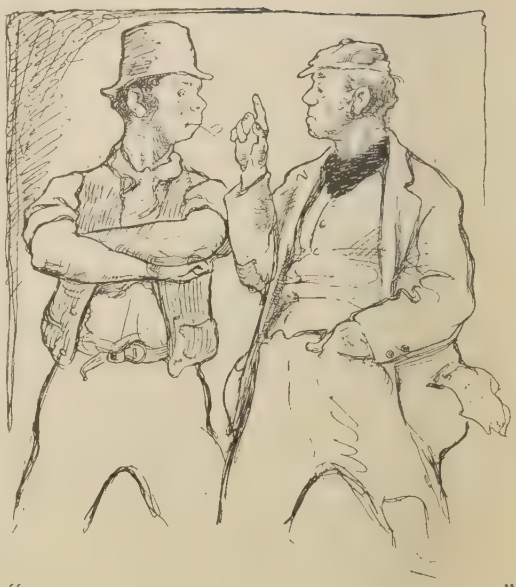
"Here, here! I'll have to arrest you. I can't have this sort of thing."

"But, my good man," expostulated the now thoroughly awakened sleep-walker, "this is not intentional. I am a somnambulist."

"I don't care what your religion is. You can't walk about the streets in your pyjamas."

When I was in London for the Coronation of King George and Queen Mary, I was much

THE POLICEMAN AND THE SOMNAMBULIST.



"YE KNOW PERFECTLY WELL I HAVE TWO PIGS."

struck by the progress which the Labour and Socialistic parties seemed to be making in "Merrie England." I cannot help thinking, however, that Socialism, as entertained by most people, is summed up in a story of two Irishmen who were discussing the beauties of Socialism.

"Shure, 'tis the happy time coming," said Pat. "'Tis the brotherhood of man, and the good fellyship of all. If you had twenty thousand dollars you'd let me have tin of thim, wouldn't ye, Mike?"

"I would that," said Mike, heartily.

"And if ye had a hundred horses the half of thim would be mine?"

"Faith, they would."

"An' if ye had two pigs, sure, ye'd give me one?"

"I would *not*. Ye know perfectly well I have two pigs."

And talking of Labour movements and Socialism, I like that other story about the Irishman who was looking for a job. He saw a sign in a bookseller's window, "Porter Wanted." "That'll just suit me," he said, and entered the shop, when he was confronted by another, "Dickens' works—all this week——for ten dollars."

The Irishman read off the sign without any stops or commas. "'Dickens works all this week for ten dollars,' does he? Well. be jabers, let him. I'm a union man."

One of the discoveries I made when I first visited England was that the people here thoroughly enjoyed a pun. I suppose the *Court Journal* is one of the most proper and

"MY MAN, YOU ARE A HERO."

sedate journals in England, but here is what it ventured to "come" on your humble servant when my friend Colonel Cody ("Buffalo Bill") was looming large in the Metropolis: "Wild Indians from the United States are being imported very fast. They will be one of the curiosities of the season. A Wild-er white man has also arrived."

American stories bounding suddenly from the sentimental to the practical delight English people of the better class—for instance, the following, told by Harold Frederics at the Savage Club dinner in London: A darky who was fishing had a little boy about two years old at his side, and as he threw the line into the water the little chap fell in also. The old darky plunged in and brought out the youngster, squeezed him out, and stood him up to dry. A clergyman who came along happened to see him, and said, "My man, you have done nobly—you are a hero. You saved that boy's life."

"Well," said the darky, "I didn't do that to sabe his life; he had de bait in his pocket."

American people, I might mention, have a very high appreciation of the humour of Englishmen, and have been specially tickled by a story my friend Colonel Cody used to tell. He said that some years ago an Englishman, who had never been in the West before, was his guest. They were riding through a Rocky Mountain canyon one day, when suddenly a tremendous gust of wind came swooping down upon them and actually carried the Englishman clear off the wagon-seat. After he had been picked up he combed the sand and gravel out of his whiskers and said:—

"I say! I think you overdo ventilation in this country!"

Many jokes have been played upon me by intimate friends. I remember Elbert Hubbard, the well-known American journalist, once took me from Chicago to New York on a half-ticket. When the conductor came round, and Elbert handed him the tickets, he looked at me, then at Hubbard, and said:—

"How old is your son?"

"YOU OVERDO VENTILATION IN THIS COUNTRY."

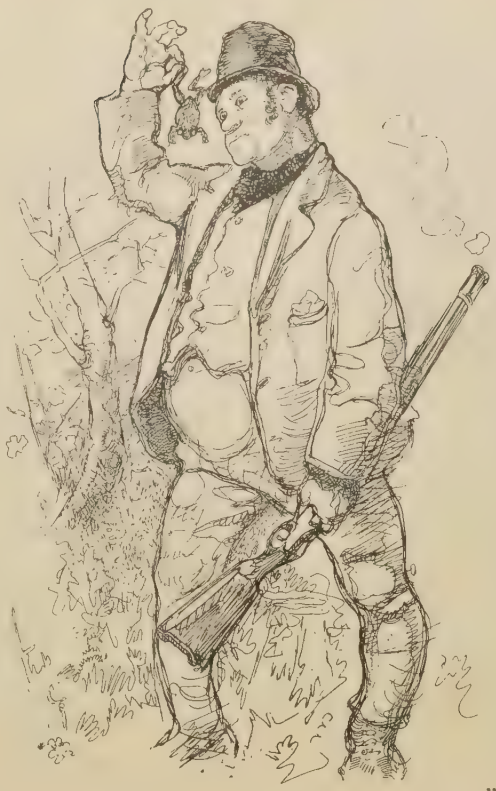
"He is seven, right enough," answered Hubbard, and gazed out of the window indifferently.

"He needs a shave," remarked the conductor, as he punched the tickets and started on.

Hubbard stopped the conductor. "If you think the little fellow is over age," he said, "why don't you ask me to pay full fare for him?"

"Well," he said, "it is like this. I thought that anyone who had as much cheek as you two have should be rewarded."

But it was carrying a joke too far, I thought, at the time—although it made me chuckle afterwards—when Elbert walked into the dining-car, tied a napkin under my chin, lifted me into a high chair, and ordered a waiter to give me a bowl of bread and milk, while he sat opposite and ordered fried chicken and everything nice on the bill-of-fare.



"ANYHOW, I KNOCKED THE FEATHERS OFF IT."

I have often been asked how I liked English audiences, and whether I found they understood American humour. Since I first visited England, in 1883, English audiences have always been kind to me. So much so that I have visited England every year since until a few years ago, when my numerous engagements at home left me no time.

It has been said that English people do not understand American humour. Well, perhaps my stories do not appeal to them in just the same way as to Americans, but they seem to appreciate them. Something like the Irishman who aimed at a bird and hit a frog. Picking it up, he looked surprised, but said:—

"Well, anyhow, I knocked the feathers off it."

People often ask me how I get my material. Why, it's all around us, if we only know where to look, and cultivate the ability to see a story in everything. I found stories all round the world. There's always something to laugh at. Even the language in Honolulu is amusing, with its bunch of "t's" that get one as badly mixed up as the young man who was so nervous the evening he was to be married that he got the minister alone and begged him to give him all the points that he possibly could about the ceremony.

"IS IT KISTOMARY TO CUSS THE BRIDE?"

"Now, Mr. Bind-'em," he quavered, "speaking as a bridegroom, you know—do tell me, is it kistomary to cuss the bride?"

Man has no greater gift than a sense of humour; the only thing that exceeds it is the ability to make others laugh. Laughter like mercy, is twice blessed: "it blesses him that gives and him that takes," and it is a great privilege to be able to let the sunshine of happiness into the dark places.

THE RAINY DAY.

By BERTRAM ATKEY.

Illustrated by John E. Sutcliffe.

FOR the seventeen years which had passed since his marriage Mr. James Bassett had done "something" in the City. Exactly what that "something" was nobody—not even Bassett himself — seemed wholly clear. Certainly his wife was never very sure. It varied so. At one time she had been under the impression that her husband's business was concerned chiefly with the sale of American agricultural machinery —"on commission." Mrs. Bassett, again, was not quite sure as to what "on commission" really meant, but she knew that the effect of it was to reduce the housekeeping allowance from three pounds a week to two pounds. This had been in the early days of their married life, and the American machinery had long since given way to an advertising agency which had raised the weekly housekeeping allowance to six pounds for a brief period. Then, just as she was getting used to receiving this amount, the advertising agency had died, and Mr. Bassett had turned his attention to a branch of industry which, his wife vaguely believed, had to do with nitrates, superphosphates, guano, and other strange-sounding chemical aids to successful, and possibly scientific, farming. Coincident with this new business the housekeeping allowance sank as low as thirty shillings weekly. Next came what Mrs. Bassett dimly understood, from brief, half-unintelligible scraps of information given now and then by her husband, to be the exploiting of certain patent rights, and the housekeeping allowance rose at a most unsettling bound to something in the neighbourhood of ten pounds a week. Then, almost before Mrs. Bassett had become accustomed to the big house into which they had moved, or quite at ease with the new servants her husband had wished her to engage, the patent rights were patently wrong, and the allowance sank again to microscopic dimensions.

Mrs. Bassett had ventured to protest, but the optimism of her husband had overwhelmed the protest before it was uttered.

"Jim, dear," she had begun, a little line of perplexity marking her forehead, "don't think I'm complaining, but——"

She got no farther. Mr. Bassett, big, fresh-faced, breezy, leaped from his chair and towered over her, shaking a finger of playful reproof at her.

"Now, my girl, don't say it—don't say it. I know just what you're thinking of—and you are quite right. It's sound—my dear little old woman, it's as sound from your point of view as—as I am!" He smote his mighty chest. "You were going to say it's not fair of me to give you no warning about my fluctuations of income—and you're right, from your point of view. But it's all right. Nothing to worry over. Believe me, old lady, any day I may come home worth twenty thousand pounds — more, perhaps. Irons, Ella—I've got so many irons in so many fires that I can't miss a fortune, sooner or later. A big 'un, my dear—a great, big pile of money. And you and the children shall spend it. You'll like that, old lady—carriage and pair, country house, everything. And I shall insure myself for ten thousand in case—— Oh, I tell you, little old missus, it's only a question of weeks—days, perhaps. I know I'm keeping you short just now, but it's all I can afford for a day or two. Only I *can* afford it. You know my rule—I only give you for the house what I can afford—what I don't want to see again. Spend that, old lady, every penny of it, and get the best value you can for it. I know what I can afford for you. And I assure you it's only a question of days, perhaps, before I strike oil. So give me a kiss, and if you worry about it again I really shall punch your head—I really shall!" And he had taken her in his arms and she had forgotten all the uncertainty—for a while.

But that had been years and years ago—and still the "fortune" had eluded Mr. Bassett. They were still living in what he playfully termed Up-and-Down Street, but he was as breezy, as strenuous, and as optimistic as ever. It was still "only a question of days"! But there are many days in seventeen years, and the passing of those days had left their marks on the pretty face of Mr. Bassett's wife. There were lines

there now that nothing would ever remove. And, also, there were the children — four of them. They had inherited their parents' good looks, and each of them possessed their father's boundless optimism. That made it harder for the watchful, anxious mother than anyone could guess. She was not of the temperament of either her husband, or of her boy, or of her three girls—she preferred regularity, certainty, consistency. She wanted now, as she had wanted all her married life, a fixed sum allowed her—small, if necessary, but certain. She hated the fluctuations—because she feared them. She could never forget a dreadful month once when, after receiving from her husband a weekly sum of twenty pounds for nearly three months, he had suddenly been unable to give her anything, and for a month they had lived on credit—until another iron had been ready to pull out from one of her husband's innumerable fires.

And that life insurance policy for ten thousand pounds—so often and so airily planned by Mr. Bassett—had never yet been taken out.

So, after seventeen years, Ella Bassett still lacked the ease of mind as to the future to which she and every woman like her is entitled and deserves. All she had gained was one certain piece of knowledge—her husband was a gambler. Not, of course, in the vulgar sense of the word — for his stakes, although he did not wholly realize it, were the happiness and well-being of the family he loved, and his opponent was the Unforeseen.

To Ella Bassett the Unforeseen loomed large—monstrous and sinister and terrifying, a deadly thing that lay in wait, in ambush.

"NOW, MY GIRL, DON'T SAY IT—DON'T SAY IT."

She had grown to fear it—to hate it. Nightly she prayed for the safe-keeping of them all from the Unforeseen.

And, during the three years that brought their period of married life up to twenty years, she had begun to arm herself against it—secretly, guiltily, furtively.

It must be remembered that she loved her husband at the end of that long time as steadfastly as at the end of twenty weeks—that he had never wearied of telling her his views as regards the spending of her household allowance, whatever it was, and that he believed in her blindly and absolutely.

"Spend what I give you, my dear," had always been his cry, "for I only give you what I can afford. Get value for it. When I give little I expect little—when I give a lot I am a Shylock, and want every ounce of value for it. It keeps me on the go to know that I've *got* to get money for you week by week—and it helps me get it!"

And for three years now she had disobeyed him. She had been saving steadily out of her housekeeping allowance.

It had begun when she suddenly realized, in panic, how closely her son Roy resembled his father. Roy had been seventeen then, and was on the point of launching out into the world for himself. Temperamentally he was his father over again—except, Mrs. Bassett suspected, that he lacked a strain of hardness, of steel, which was present in his father, though rarely noticeable.

But now her secret savings had reached a figure which rather frightened her. It was nearer five hundred pounds than four, and looking at the figures in her bank book they seemed very large. Too large, she thought, nervously. Perhaps for lack of that five hundred pounds her husband had lost fortunes. Of course, she knew that he thought it was spent—but that made no difference. She felt like a criminal.

And Roy was doing well, and was very steady—he had been articled to Stacey, the local auctioneer and estate agent.

She was hovering on the edge of confessing what she had done on the night that her husband came home in a mood of the blackest despondency he had ever experienced.

For the first time in her life she realized that he was beginning to look old and tired, and a little worn.

He ate his dinner in silence, waited until the children had gone out into the garden, and then, lighting a cigar, began to rail against his luck.

"I could have made ten thousand to-day in ten minutes if only I'd had five hundred pounds free," he said, as he had said similar things before. But this time his wife flushed guiltily. He did not notice, being too occupied in his pleasant task of self-commiseration. "Ten thousand for lifting a finger and giving a miserable five hundred a turn-over. It's always like it—a real good chance only comes at the exact moment when a man is not prepared for it."

He puffed irritably at his cigar for a moment and then his mood passed. He was never pessimistic long.

His wife hesitated; she was on the point of telling him of her hoarded five hundred pounds, but some strange little instinct checked her. What if this great scheme was only as most of the others—just a swallower-up of money that never came back? She stopped the words on the tip of her tongue, realizing that, unhappy though it made her to pinch and save from her household allowance without her husband's knowledge, it would make her unhappier still to lose it.

She said nothing at all. But she was very wretched.

During the days that followed the thought of the money haunted her like an ill dream—she hated it and yet was thankful for it. And it seemed to her that never had her husband encountered so many opportunities of making fortunes, and had been compelled to let them go by for lack of capital, as he did at this period. She did not realize that Mr. Barrett only encountered these chances because he was willing to take much greater risks. A man with no capital always fancies himself willing to take greater risks than a man who has plenty.

At last, so frequently did her husband refer to the wonderful opportunities for making fabulous sums from an investment of five hundred pounds, that the suspicion woke in her mind that he knew of her savings. She watched him anxiously thereafter—watched him in every mood, noted his every look and gesture. At the end of a week she was sure he knew.

"If I had five hundred pounds loose, Ella," he said again one night, "or if I could only borrow five hundred, I could make it into ten thousand in a month!"

She was gazing out of the window, but she knew he was looking hard at her.

"What a pity it is," she said, hating herself as she murmured the words.

She heard a little exclamation of impatience, but she steeled herself not to look round. There was a pause. Then her husband spoke again.

"It's the chance of a lifetime!" he said, without conviction. "Can you think of anybody who'd lend me the money, Ella?"

She shook her head.

"No, Jim," she answered, almost inaudibly.

"I don't suppose you've saved anything out of your allowance by any chance?" he asked, with a curious laugh, half-forced and more than a little ashamed.

She affected not to hear, and he repeated his question.

She knew then that the time had come when she must decide between fear of the Unforeseen and confidence in her husband's ability to meet it. She thought swiftly, and as she thought all her premonitions of disaster returned tenfold to her. It was almost as though she could look into the future, and see there the trouble which was waiting for them. And she thought of the children—her boy and her girls—and, her head swimming, she decided.

Her husband had stood up and crossed over to her.

"I don't suppose you've saved anything out of your allowance by any chance?" he asked, for the third time.

She looked into his eyes, and there was a look in them that she had never seen there before. It was almost hate.

"No, James," she said, faintly. "I have saved nothing."

Her heart was beating terribly, and her hands were trembling.

"Liar and thief!" said Mr. Bassett, his eyes blazing, his voice brutal with rage. "You think I don't know; but I do. Fordham at the bank let it slip out the other day. But you can keep it. Have I treated you so badly all these years that you cannot trust me with the wretched sum you've pilfered from your allowance—from your children and from me? I have humiliated myself to ask you for it—and you refuse. What good do you think you can do with it?" He was almost incoherent with anger and mortification.

"It—it—is only in case of anything happening, Jim," she stammered. "I—I'm afraid to be without anything any more. It's only just for the rainy day. You know

"'LIAR AND THIEF!' SAID MR. BASSETT, HIS EYES BLAZING, HIS VOICE BRUTAL WITH RAGE."

we've never made any provision against the future——"

"Provision!" said her husband, bitterly scornful. "*I'm* your provision against the rainy day. And I ask you for the last time—will you give me the money?"

She faced him again.

"No," she said, bravely; "I will not. You are becoming a gambler," she sobbed. "You can *kill* me now, if you like—I don't care—you have broken my heart—I'm not really a thief or a liar—I've always loved you and the children—and I only did it for all your sakes—not for myself—it was only if any of you were to be ill——"

And then her hands flew to her face, and, dropping on a couch, she began to cry as she had never cried in all her life. She heard vaguely, as though from an enormous distance, the slamming of a door, and she knew that her husband had left her alone.

She lay there, weeping. She was repaid now for her doubts, her anxieties, her tremors of the past three years. Her husband had repaid her indeed. *Liar and thief!* The tragic and dreadful words seemed written on the hot darkness under her closed lids in letters of flame. *Liar and thief!* All that she had done, the little careful things, the headaches over the tradesmen's books, the concealed economies, and all her secret efforts had effected no more than this! It was impossible—incredible.

Presently she heard the voices of her girls coming across the lawn. They had been out playing tennis at a school-companion's house.

She rose quickly, her face wrung with pain, and stole up to her room, locked the door, and threw herself on the bed. She was no longer able to think; those words seemed to hamper her mind—"Liar and thief!" She wanted to die—she hoped that she would die. There was nothing to live for now—and perhaps when she was dead she would not have "Liar and thief!" burning in red, ineffaceable letters on her brain. She had done her best for them all—and that was something, even although James did not understand. But it had broken her heart—to be called a liar and a thief after all those years together——

An hour that seemed like an eternity passed, and the room was in darkness. But the woman on the bed paid no heed to the passing of time. She lay with her face pressed to the pillow, in a stupor of misery.

Then someone knocked at the door—the sound of the knocking seemed dull and muffled to her at first, and she ignored it. The knocking grew louder and a voice called her name.

"Ella! Ella! Let me in, Ella!"

It was her husband's voice, but she hardly recognized it, for it quavered and was full of pain and a sort of terror.

She got up dully, and unlocked the door.

Her husband was standing outside, his face very pale. In the light over the landing she saw that his lips were open and trembled a little. He looked years older.

"What do you want?" she quavered.

"It's about Roy," he said. "Come downstairs."

"Roy!" In an instant her own misery was swamped by the flood of wild, unreasoning terror which the mention of her boy's name had brought.

"Roy!" she gasped. "What is the matter?"

"Come down," said her husband, obstinately, like a frightened boy.

Arranging her hair as she went, she hurried after him downstairs into the room which was usually known as the "study."

Roy was there, sitting at the table with a white, fixed face and startled eyes. Opposite him was a man who was nervously humming an air, as though anxious to show that he was at ease. She recognized him as Stacey, the auctioneer and estate agent to whom Roy was articled.

She knew that something was wrong—desperately wrong. She went over to Roy and stood behind his chair, her hands on his shoulders. The boy made a strange little sound as he felt her touch—as it were half a sob, half an exclamation of shame.

"What is the matter, Mr. Stacey?" she asked, slowly—slowly, not because she was calm, but because she was dazed and sick with fear.

Stacey, a man with the lined face of one who has fought hard for success and has encountered many disappointments, looked at her, and at the sight of her face grew more uneasy than ever.

"Mrs. Bassett," he said, nervously, and stopped. Then he began again. "Mrs. Bassett, I—you—I want you to believe that I wish to Heaven I had no reason to come here to-night. I've got youngsters myself, and—and I've—I know what trouble means. But I've got to go through with it. The fact is—the fact is, your son here has made a fool of himself. I suppose I'm to blame a bit—I allowed him too much responsibility. The fact is," he blurted out, "he's robbed me of as near three hundred pounds as makes no matter, and I can't afford to lose it!"

"SHE WENT OVER TO ROY AND STOOD BEHIND HIS CHAIR."

Roy suddenly jerked his shoulders from under his mother's hands.

"Don't touch me, mother," he said. His voice was almost a wail of self-contempt. He dropped his face on his arms.

Stacey rose, white and shaking.

"Don't think I can't understand everything it means to you and his father, Mrs. Bassett," he said. "Don't think I can't put myself in your places. I've got a boy, too. I—I don't want to be unreasonable—I want to be kind. You write me off a cheque, Mr. Bassett, two hundred and fifty, and we'll settle the balance later. I wouldn't mind waiting, only it's a client's money—not mine. I'll willingly leave Roy for you to deal with. I know it was only a slip—he's not cut out for a forger. He'll be a good boy after this lesson." Obviously Stacey hated the whole business, and was anxious to be rid of it.

Mr. Bassett looked at his wife—and never in all her life did she forget the anguish in his eyes.

"Ella," he said, hoarsely, "Ella," and shook his head.

She understood. He did not possess the money.

His scornful words of an hour or so before flashed through her head.

"Provision! *I'm* your provision for the future!" he had said, and now he was called upon to provide—and he had failed them.

She knew that this was the bitterest moment of his life, and her sorrow and pity for him tore at her heart.

She went quickly across to her writing-table, took out her cheque-book, and wrote feverishly. She handed the cheque to Mr. Stacey.

"You are a good man," she said, simply. "In a day or two perhaps I shall come and thank you properly. Only not just now—at this moment," her voice broke. Stacey understood and, with a few confused words of sympathy and regret, went out.

Ella Bassett was alone with her husband and her son And *they* were down, deep down, in the abyss of shame and humiliation, and they needed her, the one his mother, the other his wife, as they had never needed her before.

She looked at them—at her husband, drooping and abject at last, all his breezy confidence gone, standing by the window; at her son, numb and still at the table. And her eyes grew very tender and there was a wonderful light upon her face.

No longer was there any question as to who was right or who was wrong. All that was suddenly trivial and petty and infinitely small. The Unforeseen had befallen, had done its worst, and passed. Nothing was left to do now but to forgive, to begin all over again and to try to do better.

She went over to her husband.

"Jim," she whispered, "it's all right now."

But he would not look at her.

"God forgive me, I called you—*that*," he said, staring blindly out of the window. "I deserve—I deserve——" His mouth was working, and suddenly she heard that awful sound—a grown man sobbing. It was like the blow of a whip.

"Jim!" she said, aghast. "Oh, don't! I forgive you—I forgive you!" She reached up to him, her arms round his neck. Then gently, almost reverently, he bent down and kissed her.

"Oh, my dear wife," he said, and his tone was the tone of a worshipper. So they stood for a moment, and then with one accord turned to their son.

The past was past—nothing could alter one word or one action of the past. But the future remained to them—and when, presently, the explanations over, the three left the little study, tremulous with new hope and the anticipation of new happiness, regret for the past was by no means unmixed with gratitude for the present in the heart of Ella Bassett.

"SHE REACHED UP TO HIM, HER ARMS ROUND HIS NECK."

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

The "Strand" Card Game.

BY G. WILLIAMS.

AT this season of the year anything new in the way of card games is so sure of a hearty welcome that our readers will doubtless give the game here described an early trial. It is played with four differently-coloured or differently-designed sets of the letters S, T, R, A, N, D, which comprise the pack of cards. Letters of the alphabet are easily procured, or they can be made, or cut out from the advertisement pages. Boys who learn cardboard modelling in school may take it as a simple exercise, and when the pack is finished their labour will be repaid by the fun the clever ones may derive from games with their playmates.

This is an example of one game. It is played irrespective of the design and colour of the cards. Four players are most convenient, though three or two may take part. In the case of four players they separate into partners, as in whist. The cards are shuffled and dealt, six to each. Each player in turn now plays his cards consecutively as the letters in the word "Strand," the object of each party being to be first to complete the word. After playing the first letter, S, the word grows, so to speak, horizontally and vertically, of course in accordance with the sequence of the letters in the word "Strand."

There are but three rules:—

(1) When it is decided who opens the first game, each player in succession starts each new game, as in all card games.

(2) If a player has not the requisite letter or letters, he "passes," and the succeeding player plays.

(3) A player may not pass for any reason except as in (2).

Perusal of the appended diagrams will suffice to show that the game affords ample scope for ingenuity—and plenty of amusement.

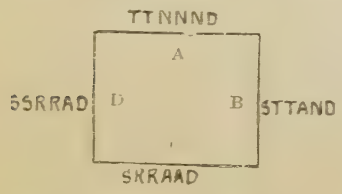


Fig. 1.—Showing the cards as dealt. A and C partners against B and D.

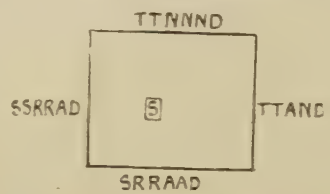


Fig. 2.—1st Circuit: A cannot play; passes. B plays S. C and D cannot play; they pass.

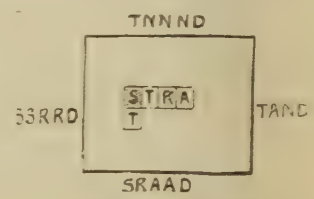


Fig. 3.—2nd Circuit: A plays T. B plays T, having no option. C plays R. D plays A.

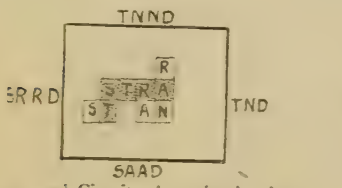


Fig. 4.—3rd Circuit: A cautiously places N. B plays A. C plays R. D plays S. Shaded portion shows part of game previously played.

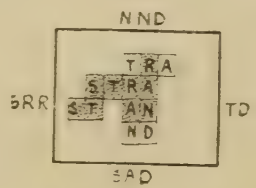


Fig. 5.
A plays T. B plays N.
C plays A. D plays D.

Fig. 6.—Finish: A plays D. B cannot play to win: throws away. C ditto. D sails in with winning card R, completing the word "Strand."

Spooneriana.

BY A. T. CORKE. ILLUSTRATED BY G. MORROW.

THE perpetration of the literary atrocity known as a "Spoonerism" must needs be an act of spontaneity, and not of malice aforethought; and he who deliberately applies himself to the achievement of an example is as one who beateth the air. Few indeed of these involuntary inversions of words that add to the gaiety of nations, and are so familiar to all English-speaking races, may fairly be attributed to their reputed author, the revered Canon and Warden of New College, Oxford; and in the following medley of examples an impersonal progenitor is assumed—the vicar, formerly a college don. It is possible that the earliest recorded examples occurred during the Long Vacation of 1871, when the vicar spent six weeks in Switzerland, "*rambling* up the *Scalps*"; and, a little later, a fortnight at Portsmouth, viewing while there the "*cattle-ships* and *bruisers*." On reaching Waterloo, after inquiring why his train had not "*clapped* at *Stop*ham Junction," he left his "*rags* and a *bug*" with a porter while he went to the refreshment-room for "a *bath* of milk and a *glass* bun."

During the course of an address on "Kindness to Animals" to the local branch of the Girls' Friendly Society, he remarked that "in Piedmont, where the sheep were so cherished, a flock would willingly follow a *shoving leopard*." The meeting in question was very sparsely attended, most of the forms in the schoolroom being unoccupied; the vicar attributed this to the fact that it had been "*roaring* with *pain*" ever since noon, and added that, as it was "*beery* work speaking to empty *wenches*," they would close by singing the well-known hymn, "From *Iceland's greasy* mountains."

The tale of his ecclesiastical mishaps is a long one, ranging from his announcement that "We will now sing Hymn 175, '*Kinquering kongs* their *tatles tike*,'" to the historic occasion on which he delivered a profound discourse on the text, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the *knee* of an *idol*," etc. One chilly Sunday morning he electrified his hearers by informing them, in the course of his sermon, that he felt a "half-*warmed fish*" rising in his bosom. To a lady whom he found in possession of his stall in the college chapel he gently observed: "Excuse me, madam, you are *occupewing* my *pie*; but if you will wait a moment the verger will *sew* you into a *sheet*."

It is even whispered that the vicar owes his matrimonial felicity to a *lapsus linguæ*. Calling upon some friends to whom he was *persona grata*, he was requested by his hostess to look for her daughter, who was somewhere in the garden, and to ask her if she would come in and "make tea." After some search, he found the young lady reading in a secluded summer-house, and thus addressed her, in his somewhat stilted style: "My dear Miss ——, your mother has empowered me to ask you if you would be so very good as to *take me*." And she did!

Amongst the vicar's other "derangements of epitaphs" may be cited the following: His regret that he would be obliged to give up his local tradespeople, and in future "*steal* at the *doors*"; his deprecation of the prevalent habit of reducing everything to a "*lead devil*"; his predilection for "*horse*-rabbit with his Welsh *radish*"; his inquiry as to the suitable "*tax* for a *tipsy*-cab"; his remarkable apostrophizing of an amazed audience of agricultural labourers as "You *tons* of *soil*"; his inimitable rendering of a certain line in "The Burial of Sir John Moore," "As his *horse* on the ramparts we *curried*"; his request at an Old Boys' Dinner (at the *Dull* Man of *Greenwich*), when the sweets appeared, for "some of that *stink puff*," and at dessert for "some *pigs' fleas*," and, in his subsequent speech, his avowal that he felt much "*grattered* and *flattified*" by his reception; his complaint to the station-master of the continued unpunctuality of the "*town drain*"; and his story of the wonderful escape of his favourite cat, who, in falling from a roof, "lightly *popped* on its *drawers*."

But the apotheosis of his vagaries is reached in this stern reprimand to an erring and, let us hope, repentant undergraduate: "Sir, your conduct has been nothing less than disgraceful; you have *hissed* three of my *mystery* lectures, you have been convicted of *fighting* a *liar* in the inner quad, and, in addition, there is no doubt whatever in my own mind that you have *tasted* a whole *worm!*"

Magic Figure Designs—A New Amusement.

By H. DEARDEN-MATSON.

THE table herewith is the result of some experiments with figures, and is not collected together in a haphazard manner by chance, but by a certain method. Its peculiar features are not altogether apparent at first glance, but reveal themselves the more the table is studied. The first thing that strikes one is the similarity of the four sides, of figures 1 to 8: next, that the second line from the bottom is similar to the second line from the top, but reversed, while the same is noted of the second column from either side. It then dawns upon one that the four bottom rows of figures are the four top rows reversed, and the four left-hand columns bear a similar relation to the four right-hand columns. So much for the structure of this remarkable table. Many interesting results in addition could be given, but they would give away the secret of the construction of the table. The writer is anxious to find out if this table is entirely new or not, and would be glad if readers would exercise their ingenuity by trying to discover how it is arrived at.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	4	6	8	1	3	5	7
3	6	9	3	6	9	3	6
4	8	3	7	2	6	1	5
5	1	6	2	7	3	8	4
6	3	9	6	3	9	6	3
7	5	3	1	8	6	4	2
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Plain block of figures without the lines.

Fig. 1.

Leaving out, therefore, for the present all the possibilities in it from an arithmetical point of view, we will proceed to investigate some of the diagrammatic beauties which lie hidden. Below is the result of tracing similar figures to their positions from left to right

In the first diagram arrived at (Fig. 1) it was considered odd that all the lines from the left to the right half should cross exactly at the same point—in the middle. It will be observed that the figure 9 has no place in the scheme, except the four between the 6's and 3's, which take up an independent position and serve as connecting mediums, or stand aside altogether. In this case they stand aside. It has been remarked that this diagram has in it something analogous to the arrangement of the human brain viewed from the top.

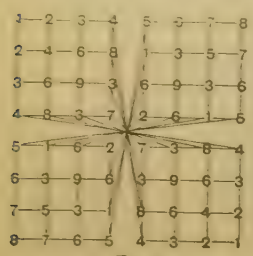


Fig. 2.

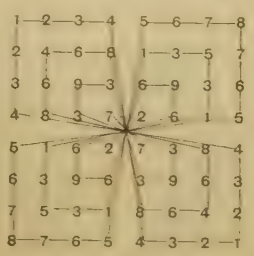


Fig. 3.

The next diagrams, Figs. 2 and 3, were arrived at by nearly similar processes, though the designs are quite different. In Fig. 2 the left-hand top numbers 1 to 4 were connected that 4 and the bottom opposite 4, and on to the 1 in the right-hand bottom corner. Similarly 2 and 8, the 8's joined and then the bottom 8 and 2. So with the rest, and also the same process from right to left, downwards and upwards. Fig. 3 was begun in the same way; but, instead of stopping at the bottom right-hand 1, that figure and the middle 4 were connected, and so back to the first 1. Then a fresh start was made with the 4, 6, 8 line, and so on.

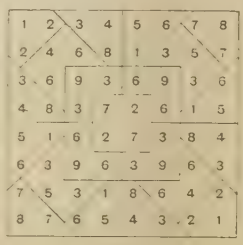


Fig. 4.

The next diagram, Fig. 4, was purely accidental. There are sixty-four figures in the table, and the idea was to isolate the four numbers in the middle, and bring the remaining numbers into compartments of three figures each, with what result can be seen.

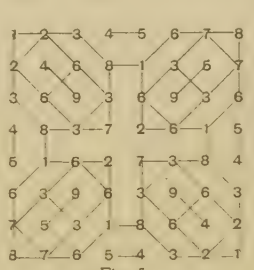


Fig. 5.

In Fig. 5 the similarity of the diagonal lines is apparent, and the great dissimilarity of designs can be seen by comparing with the next, Fig. 6, which consists of straight lines running from the four 9's to the extremities of each quarter, when a very fine star is obtained.

Fig. 7, which is the result of connecting 6's and 3's only, was considered likely to be of use for diamond-cutting. It is to be borne in mind that in no case is any diagram of a capricious nature. Each is the result of following some definite plan, such as connecting certain figures in as many ways as possible, the remaining figures simply forming the background, as it were; as, for instance in the very fine example, Fig. 8, when 6's and 8's and 3's and 1's have been connected, and the gaps filled in according to the symmetry obtained.

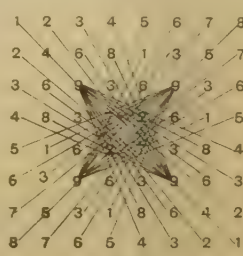


Fig 6.

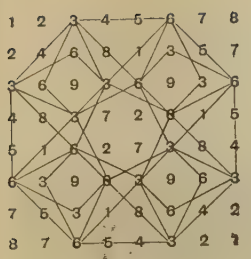


Fig. 7

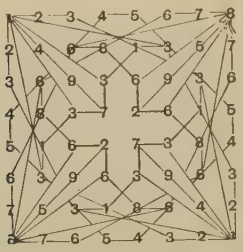


Fig 8.

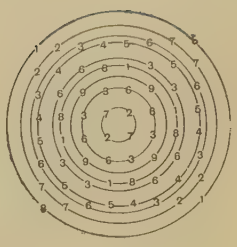


Fig. 9

Very little has been done with circles, which offer a large field to anyone who takes an interest in this sort of thing; but what has been done is sufficiently curious. In Fig. 9 it will be noticed that there are nine circles, though only eight lines of figures, and that not more than two different figures are in each circle. The diagram is made by taking each figure in succession from the centre as the radius, and describing the circle. The two dissimilar figures in each circle will, if added together, make nine.

The interest attached to a study of this magic table is much increased when the way it is arrived at is known, as, apart from the diagrams, figures can then be combined and calculations made, which extend the field of investigation immensely. As for the diagrams, a few only have been introduced, but the writer is quite sure that the number which can be evolved is practically limitless. Those which follow (Figs. 10 to 18) need hardly be analyzed further; they are given as indications of what may be done. It has proved a most fascinating hobby, and there are indications which show a practical use for the table. It is presented in the hope that such may be the case, and that it will at least afford interest and a new amusement.

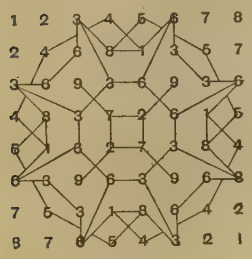


Fig. 10.

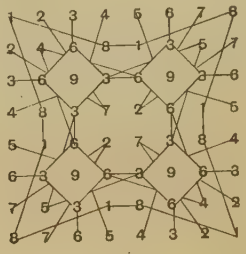


Fig. 11.

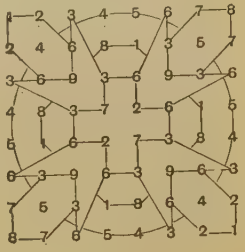


Fig. 12.

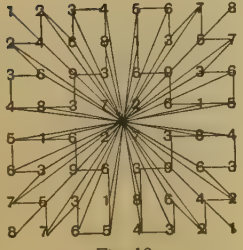


Fig. 13.

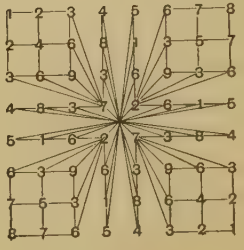


Fig. 14.

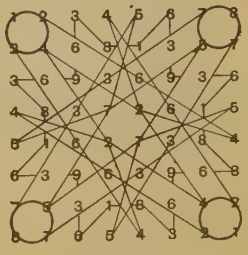


Fig. 15.

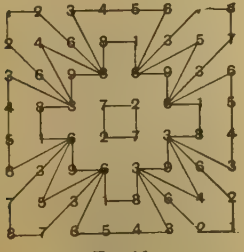


Fig. 16.

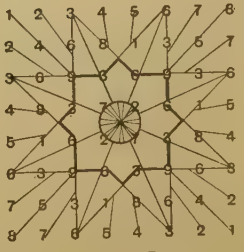


Fig. 17.

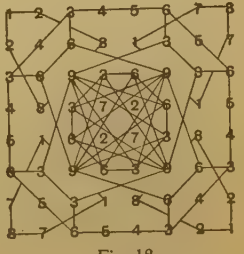


Fig. 18.

Simple Weather-Tellers.

By S. LEONARD BASTIN.

IT is a standing joke amongst foreign nations that British people talk more about the weather than anything else. This is hardly a matter for surprise when the strange vagaries of our climate are considered. Almost anything seems to be possible, and it is rarely that a year goes by without some fresh record being established. On this account it seemed to be of interest to form a collection of the numerous contrivances which have been invented from time to time to give some indication of coming weather. Many of these are extremely curious, and, whilst not in all cases recognized by the scientific observer, have been shown to be remarkably accurate in the forecasts which they give.

Fig. 1.—The Seaweed Weather-Prophet.

Most people know that the state of the atmosphere, whether it be dry or moist, has a direct bearing on coming weather. Rain and unsettled conditions are likely when the air is full of moisture, and fine weather may be expected when the reverse is the case. Now, the greater number of weather contrivances are simply hygroscopes—devices to tell us whether the air is dry or moist. One of the oldest and simplest of these is the piece of seaweed (Fig. 1). Suspended in a porch, or in an apartment where there is no fire, the weed is crisp and dry at the approach of fine weather, whilst it is flabby and moist when rain is likely. A common toy, the Swiss weather-house, is really quite reliable in its forecasts. The woman, of course, emerges from the little house in fine weather, whilst the man comes out when wet conditions are to be expected. In a medium state of the atmosphere both figures stand just inside the house. The movements are due to the twisting of a cord of catgut, a substance which is highly sensitive to changes in the humidity of the air.

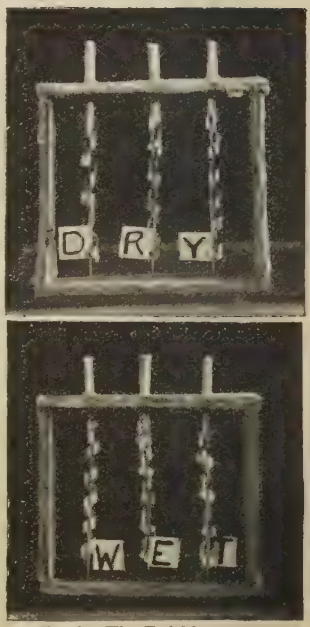


Fig. 3.—The Foil Hygroscope.

One of the strangest of all weather devices is that which has been called the butterfly hygroscope (Fig. 2). In this the awns of the Egyptian wild oat are employed, these being highly responsive to variations in atmospheric moisture. The wings of the butterfly are made of paper, suitably painted in colours. The body is formed of a piece of cardboard, whilst on each side is attached an awn in the manner indicated. The awns must be placed in opposite directions on either side of the wings, the lower parts being fastened down to the base on which the butterfly is mounted. The awns should be fixed in position on a damp day, so that the wings of the insect are closed. As the atmosphere becomes dryer it will be found that the butterfly's wings slowly open; this is, of course, simply due to

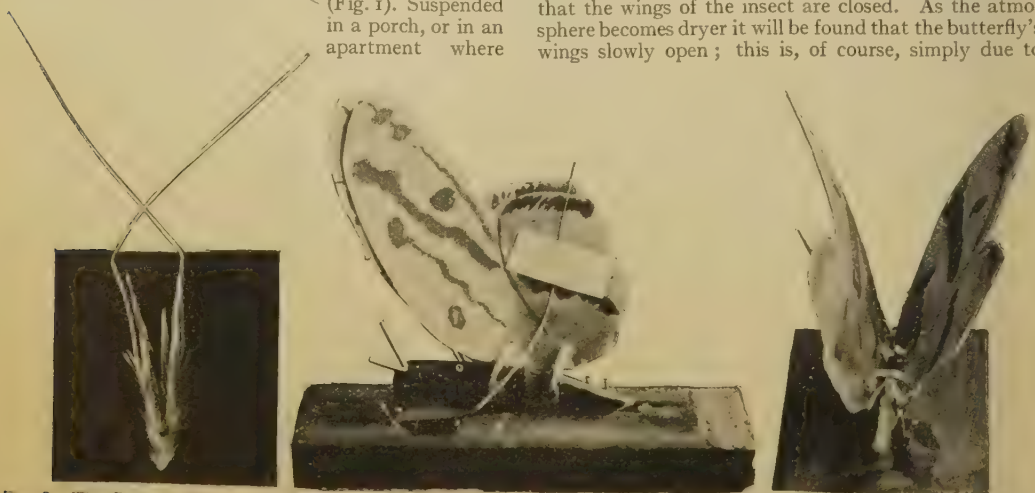


Fig. 2.—The Butterfly Hygroscope—The awns of barley to which the wings are attached and the butterfly when finished. The wings close in wet weather and open in dry.

the twisting of the lower parts of the awns, which pull over the upper portion fastened against the wings.

Probably one of the most sensitive weather contrivances is the foil hygroscope (Fig. 3). This consists of three slips of jeweller's foil—thin silver covered on one side with a varnish. The slips should be cut with scissors, and then twisted round a piece of wire until they resemble ringlets. A little framework is made, as shown in the picture, and the three ringlets placed in position, supported by needles running up the centre. The upper end of each piece of foil is attached with seccotine to a small wooden peg, and at the lower part small flags, bearing on one side the letters D R Y and on the other W E T, are attached. The contrivance is set to W E T in damp weather, a wire being stretched across the back of the frame to prevent the letters from going too far back. It will be found that very slight changes in the humidity of the atmosphere will induce the little flags to turn round, and in this way give us an indication of what we may expect.

Fig. 4.—The Chameleon Barometer, which changes colour according to the weather.

Fig. 5.—A Flower Barometer which changes colour.

The chameleon barometer (Fig. 4) is certainly a curiosity which has puzzled a good many people, but its construction is really very simple. The animal changes colour according to the weather, being pink in damp conditions, purple in a variable state, and bright blue when the air is dry. A cardboard mount is prepared, and this may be lettered in the manner indicated. The chameleon is sketched out on blotting-paper, and then immersed in a solution of chloride of cobalt, to which are added chloride of sodium and gum arabic. Any chemist will make up the mixture.

A more beautiful chemical hygroscope is formed of a flower made of white blotting-paper which has been immersed in the cobalt mixture. The blossoms show many varying shades, from bright pink to sky blue, with the changes in the degree of dampness in the atmosphere (Fig. 5).

A somewhat curious storm-glass was introduced by the late Admiral Fitzroy (Fig. 6). This is formed of a glass tube, stoppered, but with a small hole through the cork. Into the tube has been poured

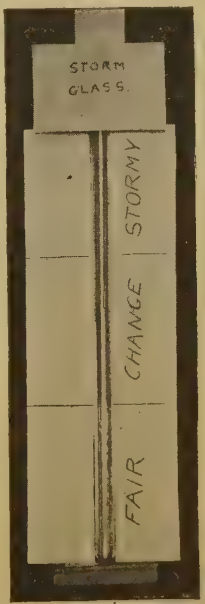


Fig. 6.—Admiral Fitzroy's Storm-Glass.

mixture of camphor, nitre, sal ammoniac, alcohol, and water. The changes in the state of the atmosphere are indicated by the production of feathery growths, these extending upwards at the approach of a storm and retreating to the lower part of the tube in quiet weather.

A much more simple, but quite an effective, contrivance is the water barometer. This is formed of a glass jam-jar, an empty oil-flask, and plain water. The jar is filled to half its capacity with water, and the inverted flask is placed as shown in the illustration (Fig. 7). The rising and falling of the water in the neck of the flask indicates the increase and decrease of the pressure of the atmosphere. Of course, the application is the same as that of an ordinary barometer.

Two very singular weather devices are those in which a frog and a leech are employed. In the former case a glass jam-jar is filled to about two-thirds of its capacity with water. A little wooden ladder is constructed, and this is placed inside the jar. A frog will live quite happily in such a position for a few weeks, and it will be found that in fine weather the creature will climb out up to the top of the ladder. In stormy weather, however, the frog prefers to remain under the water. Even more reliable as weather prophets are leeches. A single leech is placed in a broad glass bottle with a piece of perforated bladder or leather over the mouth. On the approach of fine or frosty weather the leech remains almost motionless, curled up at the bottom. When rain or wind is coming the creature rises to the surface, whilst a coming thunder-storm will cause it to be much agitated; at times the leech will even leave the water altogether, so sensitive is the animal to an electrical disturbance.

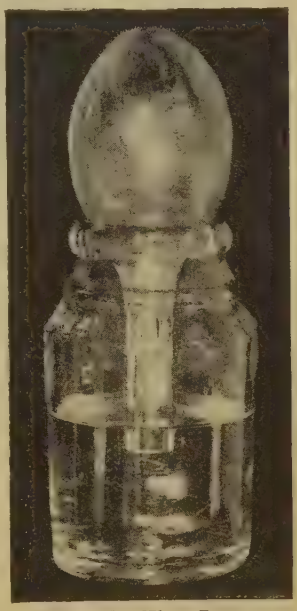
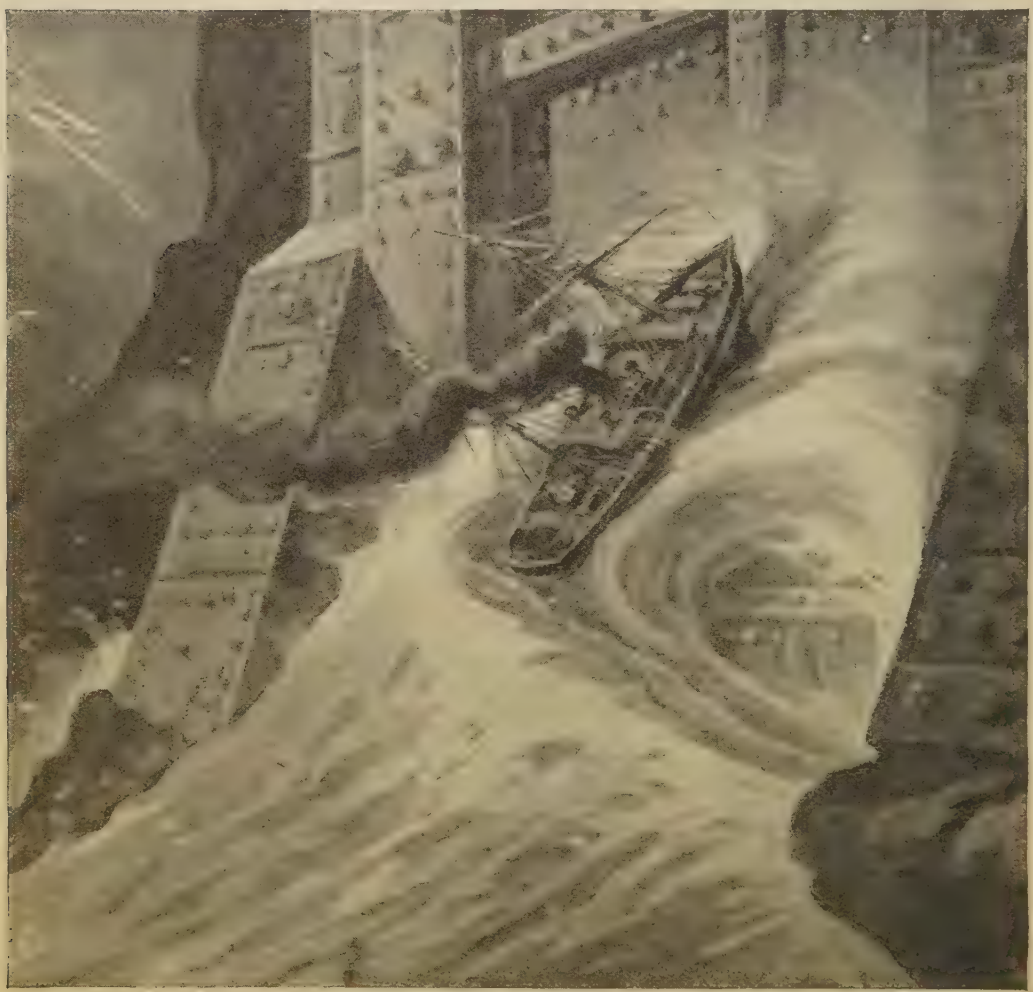


Fig. 7.—The Water Barometer.

The Isle of Mystery and Its Marvels.

By OCTAVE BELIARD.

Illustrated by H. Lanos.



"THE SHIP HAD BEEN DASHED AGAINST A VERTICAL IRON WALL, AND IN AN INSTANT WAS A TOTAL WRECK."

THE astounding adventure I am about to relate happened on the night of the fifteenth of March last year, during a trip I had taken to study the French settlements in the Indian Ocean. Our boat, the *Fulton*, was one of those antiquated steamboats which our grandfathers looked upon as marvellous inventions. Step by step it had fallen from its high estate until now, while awaiting the final attentions of the shipbreaker, it was employed in maintaining a postal service between Mahé and the Comorin Islands. It had a very curious appearance. The old-fashioned funnel resembled an out-of-date top-hat, and the two stumpy masts had no doubt been provided

in case of an accident to the engines, though, had their services been required, they certainly could not have carried sufficient canvas to have brought the old tub to the nearest port.

On that memorable night, at the very first shock of the tempest, the sails were blown to ribbons, and we shipped such heavy seas that the boiler-fires were almost extinguished. Our situation was desperate. We were completely at the mercy of the storm. In the captain's own words, all we could do was to allow the raging wind to carry us whither it would.

During the whole night we were the sport of wind and waves, now scaling a watery mountain, now slipping down, down, into a seemingly bottomless abyss, amid the ominous creaking of the ancient hull and the shrieking of the tempest. Everyone felt certain that death was but a question of hours, or possibly of moments. It was as if both ship and wind together were being irresistibly sucked in by the jaws of some far-distant, invisible monster.

Then suddenly we saw land ahead. It was at first merely a dark patch above the horizon. But very rapidly the patch increased in size and we saw a long line of bristling, perpendicular rocks, against which the storm was hurling us.

The grey dawn brought into view, in the flank of the cliff, an immense black hole, into which the wind was rushing. The tempest and we with it were on the point of being sucked into the entrails of the earth. Another moment, and we should have been swept with the tempest into the black jaws of the colossal cavern, when suddenly there rang out the sharp, imperious tinkle of the ship's alarm-bell.

The appeal was evidently heard. A terrific crash of metal was followed by a stupefying shock, which shot me into the air as if I had been a living bombshell. The ship had been dashed against a vertical iron wall, and in an instant was a total wreck.

Contact with the sea restored me to consciousness. I had fallen into the water amid the wreckage of the *Fulton*, which covered the rocks with an indescribable chaos of splintered wood and twisted iron. The wind had abated, and numerous bodies were being carried out to sea by the ebb-tide. Very fortunately, I was able to obtain a foothold in the shallow water, for, bruised and bleeding as I was, I should have been far too weak to swim. At last I reached the dry sand, on which I fell down, quite exhausted. When I was able to look quietly about me I saw that the yawning hole in the cliff had disappeared. In its place was a vertical iron wall, on which the shock of the vessel had left a few glimmering scratches. Assuredly this mysterious gate had been closed just in time to bar the passage against us.

A voice hailed me. The captain, the only survivor except myself, his clothes in tatters, and covered with seaweed and scum, was dragging himself painfully over the sand.

"Bad luck," he said, "has thrown us upon what is certainly the most deserted region in the world. I have not the slightest doubt that this is Bellows Island, a volcanic formation which rose from the sea less than a century ago, and which the few geographers who have taken note of it have marked in their maps as being in the very middle of the Indian Ocean."

"This seems very strange to me, captain. Are you sure that your mind has not been affected by what we have gone through? How is it possible that, in a sea like this, continually crossed by vessels, and at a time when the world is nearly all explored, any island could possibly remain so little known?"

"The fact is as I say. When this island first appeared, and so long as it remained an arid, uninhabitable rock capped by a volcano, it was quite simple to land upon it. But for a number of years it seems as if, in some mysterious manner, it were standing on its defence against the curiosity of men. However much or however little truth there may be in this legend, one thing is certain—all who have attempted to approach it have been driven out of their route by sudden storms. It is said that there comes from it, as from a gigantic bellows, a tempest which repels ships from its shores. Hence its name—the Bellows Island."

My eyes fell upon the great iron door which covered the subterranean entrance.

"In any case," I said, "there is the spot from which a tempest might have come, for it is there a tempest entered. That wrought-iron door is a sure proof, moreover, that human intelligence has been at work. There are men *here*"—I spoke with conviction—"civilized men, great engineers——"

"For our sake," sighed the captain, "I only hope you are right."

He was still speaking when I interrupted him with a cry of delight. A small boat had shot round the promontory and was coming straight in our direction, without either oars or sails, propelled, no doubt, by some kind of hidden motor. In it a man was making friendly signals to us. He was dressed quite

in European fashion, though the cut of his clothes was somewhat out of date. When he was quite near us he jumped out of the boat and came quickly across the rocks.

"Gentlemen," he began, "we are terribly grieved at what has happened to you. We would gladly have done anything to obviate it, but to have allowed your boat to enter the wind-cave would have been to send every one on board to certain death. To close the door was to give you the one solitary chance of safety that remained. I see, alas!" —he stopped to look round at the floating bodies—"that it has been of little use to most of you. The best thing to be done now, however, so far as you two are concerned, is to come with me to the harbour. Your companions will be decently buried, and any wreckage that can be turned to account will be collected."

Both the captain and I were so feeble that our thanks were but brief. Our rescuer helped us into the boat, which at once started at great speed. We attempted to tell him our story. When we were expressing our amazement at the sudden end of the tempest and the mysterious force which had driven us against the island, our unknown acquaintance said, very gravely:—

"You will have many other subjects of astonishment. We are a nation of inventors, whom poverty and the incredulity of those who wield the power of money have forced to retire from the world. Have you ever asked yourself what becomes of all those ingenious persons who never succeed in turning their discoveries to account? Many of them have found a refuge here, and are now able to laugh at the fools who sneered at the inventions of their genius as wild dreams. By our united efforts we voluntary exiles have created industry and life on a barren rock. We are Nature's masters. We expressly selected this island, which is situated on the line of the great natural tempests, and we capture the storms as bird-catchers trap doves, in order to utilize their energy in our houses and in our workshops. Last night we were storing up our wind-supply in our deep underground caves. Wind is compressed air, which costs us nothing, and can be utilized in innumerable ways."

While this extraordinary man, who could make the wind and the tempest do his bidding, was still speaking, our boat was drawing alongside the breakwater of the harbour, which was the scene of tumultuous activity.

This breakwater and pier was itself most curious, and resembled none we had ever before seen. The sides were not of stone, but were formed of iron plates, each fixed upon an axle, which turned over with a clicking sound, such as is made by a released spring, every time the sea broke against them.

"You perceive," said our guide, "that we are even able to utilize the movement of the waves. Every impact of the water on these steel plates imparts a motion to a toothed wheel in the interior of the jetty, and this, by means of a simple mechanical arrangement of axles and cog-wheels, is transmitted to those splendid factories you see along the shore, in which it sets the looms automatically to work. The sea is the indefatigable toiler who weaves our garments and linen, as well as the canvas which protects our gardens from the weather."

By this time we had landed and were walking towards the town.

Our guide pushed open a door.

"Look what the sea can do," he said.

Before our eyes there stretched a long gallery, in which the sunlight was dancing on myriads of taut threads, amid a chaos of whirling wheels and leather belting. The shuttles, impelled by invisible hands, shot like lightning to and fro across the warp. Happy-looking women were rolling up the pieces of these miraculous stuffs, some fine and transparent as lace, others warm and heavy.

"You see," continued our companion, "how docile and patient we have made the ocean, who has killed so many men!"

"What happens when she takes the bit between her teeth?" inquired the captain.

"When she is irritated she does her work more quickly, that is all."

"What about the tide? At low water the sea is far away."

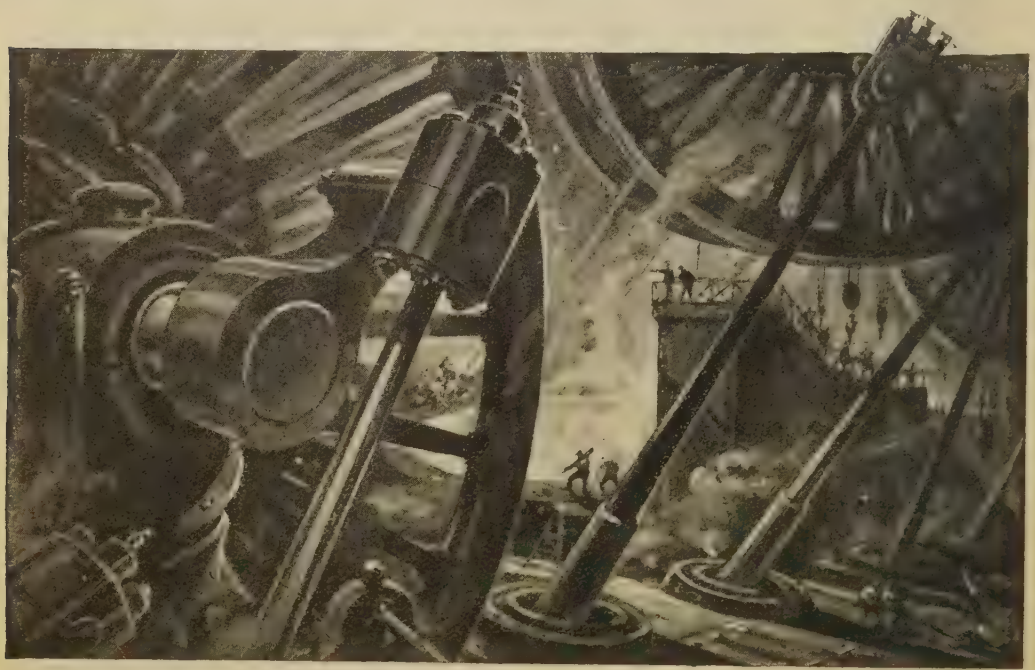
"That is true. The sea actually beats upon the jetty only for about nine hours out of the twenty-four. But surely civilized persons such as you will not grudge so industrious a servant a nine hours' working day!"

For the first few days of my stay in Bellows Island I was obliged to rest. I was inclined to fancy that such excitement and novelty would enable me to get the better of my weakness, but the shock had been too severe and my wounds, though insignificant, too painful. I was compelled to remain in bed. From my spacious, comfortable room I had a good view of the town. All the resources of the volcanic soil had been turned to the best account by the engineers. The houses, built of black lava, but by no means of depressing

"EVERY IMPACT OF THE WATER ON THESE STEEL PLATES IMPARTS A MOTION TO A TOOTHED WHEEL IN THE INTERIOR OF THE JETTY."

aspect under the glaring tropical sun, were of original and harmonious designs. Space being somewhat restricted, very few vehicles were to be seen, except electric cars, while the inhabitants, though comparatively few, filled the streets with life and activity. But what really distinguished the place from all others I had seen was the extraordinary utilization of natural forces, which elsewhere are allowed to run to waste.

In Europe we hardly yet know how to employ those two forms of natural energy which cost us nothing—the wind, which turns a few mills, and the mountain waterfalls. We prefer to create energy at enormous expense by the combustion of coal. In Bellows Island coal is unknown, so that the exiles were obliged to discover other sources of active energy. The wind, the lightning, rain, the ocean, the very fires of the volcano, of which the giant crater dominated the island, had become the regular auxiliaries of the inhabitants.



"WITH A SOUND THAT MADE THE MOUNTAIN TREMBLE THE COLOSSAL RODS BEGAN TO MOVE."

It would be impossible to enumerate the very many uses to which the force of the wind had been applied. I had already learned roughly how—if I may employ a homely but expressive simile—the winds were bottled up for use. Then the volcanic fires had formed in the subsoil of the island a vast number of caverns, almost round and grouped somewhat like the holes in a sponge, each of them in communication with a great central cave. By dint of superhuman patience the walls of these caverns had all been carefully polished. Through the gigantic tubes, thus transformed into so many enormous engine-cylinders, pistons worked backward and forward throughout their entire length. The rods of the pistons, which were driven by steam generated by the inexhaustible volcanic furnace, set in motion immense fly-wheels, a hundred feet high. The entire subsoil, it may be said, thus formed one enormous engine. I shall refer to the enormous steam-boiler in the volcano later on. When, with a sound which made the mountain tremble, this machinery was set in motion, the colossal rods began to move, the escape-pipes spat forth flame, the iron doors of the gaping hole on the cliff-face were raised, and the pistons were drawn back, sucking the wind into the empty reservoirs, until the island had renewed its stock of compressed air.

By means of an installation of pipes, similar to those we use for gas-lighting, this compressed air was distributed everywhere. There was nothing for which it did not serve, from a flour-mill to a potter's wheel. During the night a slight whiff of the air was sufficient to cleanse the streets more effectually than the best mechanical apparatus employed by any municipal body in Europe. In private

houses the air was used for such humble missions as blowing a dull fire, and in my own room, while I was recovering from my fatigue, and when the heat was tropical, I was able, by merely turning a tap near my bed, to bathe myself in a stream of cool, refreshing air.

I was frequently visited by our rescuer, a person of considerable importance, who was in charge of the Wind Department. The post was no sinecure, as I was able to judge for myself when I inspected his laboratory the first time I went out. He passed his life surrounded by scientific instruments which he had made himself—anemometers hygrometers, manometers, all connected with the subterranean reservoirs. Every hour it was his duty to note the state of the atmospheric currents. He it was, too, who regulated the consumption of air by the public, according to the reserves available.

Another of his duties was to protect the island from the curiosity of strangers, who might have interfered with the independence of the inhabitants. On days when a ship was sighted there was never any question of economizing the wind. On the contrary, every sluice was opened wide, every reservoir of air was emptied. The ship, assailed by the tempest thus blown from the very bowels of the earth, was carried in another direction, and so the secret which was so carefully concealed from the world remained inviolate once more. In our case it had happened that our ship had come within the action of the engines when they were sucking air into the mountain, and it was only by the sudden shutting of the iron doors that we were saved.

"I suppose," I said to our friend one day, "that it is also by means of air-mills that you procure the electricity which lights the place?"

It was dusk at the time. The temperature was sweltering, and we were sipping iced drinks on a terrace overlooking the town and the sea.

"It would certainly be possible to do so," he replied, with some pride. "With wind you can do practically anything. But if we were to call upon it to furnish us with all the energy we require, it might prove insufficient to meet every demand. You have seen the tide weaving our garments under the superintendence of my eminent friend, Mr. Reflux. The Ministry of Lightning is in charge of a German physicist, Mr. Drypile, who makes the clouds supply him with all the electricity he has need of. In this latitude, where the weather is constantly stormy and it thunders every day at sunset, it was only natural that such a plan should be resorted to. Look," went on our guide; "there are the clouds accumulating, and Mr. Drypile is at his post."

Low mutterings announced the approach of the evening storm. Pointing with his finger, he showed me a flock of kites taking flight from every point of the town. Their number was such that they almost hid the sky.

"In reality, very little was necessary to perfect Franklin's experiment," he continued. "These toys are covered with thin sheets of tin, and the threads which hold them are soaked in acidulated water. Really, they are merely ordinary lightning-conductors, with this difference, however, that, instead of conducting the electricity of the clouds to the ground, they are connected with immense batteries of accumulators, which form reservoirs of electrical energy. But this is not all. We also make electricity with steam."

"With steam?"

Turning towards the centre of the island, he showed us the volcano, now delicately rose-tinted by the rays of the setting sun, while its base was already azured by the oncoming night. "What you see there is our boiler!" he said.

The volcano was the great marvel of the island. Never have men possessed so formidable a slave nor one so entirely devoted to their orders. No smoke-cap appeared at its summit; you might almost have thought it was extinct. Such, however, was far from being the case. The principal crater had been converted into a gigantic boiler, which the flame was constantly licking beneath, and which was filled with water. Thus was furnished the steam for the subterranean engines, and also for the forges situated at the base of the mountain. All day long you might hear the steam-hammers at work in the workshops which encircled the volcano.

The volcano not only supplied the necessary force for the forges; it furnished the metals as well.

With the captain I made an excursion to the forges. We started at dawn, and after a walk of two hours we began to hear the beating of the hammers. Before us, mounting the sky, towered the volcano, capped by a brazen dome on which, from time to time, a safety-valve would open to allow a thin jet of steam to escape. At a certain height the mountain became steep and rugged, with rivers of ancient cinder. Tunnels pierced it from side to side, through which poured torrents of fiery red lava.

The main forge, with its rolling-mills, its hammers, and its anvils, filled vast, vaulted grottoes, which resounded with a reverberating din. The incandescent metal was placed on tables of brass. The hammer was a mass of iron several tons in weight, giving rise each time it fell to a shower of glittering sparks, moulding the metal as if it had been paste. The manufactured object, which gradually grew black at the contact of the air, fell into a great basin of cold water with an angry hiss.

In a colossal bearded figure leaning against an anvil I fancied I beheld Vulcan himself, the King of Iron!

I ventured to address this presiding deity.

"That is a boiler," I said, pointing to the closed crater, "which must change enormous quantities of water into steam."

"Yes; we use more than six hundred tons a day."

"Is it possible? But, in that case, the rain that falls from the sky cannot be sufficient to make up the quantity. Where do you get the balance from?"

"We bring it up," was the phlegmatic answer.

"What! You mean to say you bring more than six hundred tons of water up to such a height every day?"

"It is not exactly *we* who bring it up. The tide does the actual work. You evidently were not aware that we utilize the tides also."

"Even now I am afraid I don't quite understand. The difference in level between low and high water is not more than twenty feet or so. How, then, can the water rise to the height of the crater? The volcano must be at least six or seven hundred feet above sea-level."

He smiled.

"Imagine," he said, "a lever, with a right-angled shoulder and sufficiently rigid, the longer arm of which is six hundred feet in length. Now lower the smaller arm until it is horizontal. The longer arm, in the process, will have described an arc of a circle, the radius of which is equal to the length of the arm, and it will have carried to a height of six hundred feet whatever burden you may have attached to its extremity. The smaller arm meanwhile will have moved through quite an insignificant space. That is, roughly, the principle. Now I will show you how the theory is put into practice. Naturally, a colossal force must be applied to the smaller arm—a weight, in fact, greater than the total weight of the longer arm and its burden. Moreover, it must be a weight susceptible of modification, so as to permit of the longer arm being lowered again after it has performed its work. It is here that the differences in sea-level at different hours of the day come in."

We were just then rounding a spur of the mountain, and suddenly there appeared before me the most colossal object I have ever beheld. On that side the waves broke on the very flank of the mountain. On the shore, two cyclopean pillars supported a steel axle twenty feet in diameter, on which turned a gigantic angular lever. This lever, the construction of which recalled to some extent the framework of the Eiffel Tower, was made up of great steel beams, united by an intricate network of cross-beams and ties. Its smaller arm, relatively rather short, was bolted at its extremity to a great raft floating in the sea—a raft that was ten times larger than the largest steamer afloat, and heavily laden. The long arm of the lever, more than six hundred feet in length, supported at its extremity an immense tank, of a sufficient capacity to hold some three hundred tons of water.

"You see," said our guide, "the incoming tide, while it causes the raft to rise, raises at the same time the smaller arm of the lever and, consequently, lowers the extremity of the longer arm to sea-level. The tank at once, of course, fills with water. As the tide ebbs again the raft descends, dragging down the smaller arm after it, while the long arm, little by little, rises, until the extremity is at the height of the crater, where the tank tilts and empties its contents. Six hours are occupied in the ascent, six in the descent. As you are aware, there are two tides in the twenty-four hours, so that every day six hundred tons of water, more or less, are raised to the boiler. To set up the machine necessitated an enormous amount of labour, but ever since its erection it has gone on working by itself, and will continue to do so indefinitely, without any attention whatever."

As dusk was coming on we were descending the slope which led straight back to the town, through the fragrant olive-woods. In the distance the cistern terraces of the town shone out with the clear sheen of small lakes. The captain was buried deep in his reflections about the day's experiences.

"Don't you think," he said, breaking the silence at last, "that the inhabitants of this island rather take advantage of Nature's kindness? Suppose Nature were to take it into her head to have her revenge?"

But how could Nature possibly revolt with

"THE PRINCIPAL CRATER HAD BEEN CONVERTED INTO A GIGANTIC BOILER."

any chance of success, chained up and caged as she was? So absolutely had she been mastered that it was difficult to see how she could have given practical vent to her fury, whatever her feelings might be.

It would be impossible to describe even a tithe of the other achievements of these subtle inventors. To agriculture, however, they gave special attention. Whoever has seen the rich vineyards on the slopes of Vesuvius knows that volcanic alluvial soil is particularly fruitful. In addition to the olive plantation, the island also had vines, cereals of all kinds, and miraculous gardens filled at all seasons with fruits and flowers.

The cultivated region resembled an immense hot-house. Heat and water were distributed in the most methodical manner and absolutely nothing was left to chance. No garden was ever allowed to receive more rain than it required, and automatic watering made up for any abnormal dryness in the atmosphere during very hot weather. Cold nights were by no means rare, but the plants were kept at a uniform temperature by irrigation with tepid water. In this way the eternal spring the poets have sung of was artificially brought about. On the same day, no matter what season of the year it was, you could see the flowers of May opening their buds and the fruits of September ripening.

Nor was this all. When experimenting on the decomposition of sunlight with a prism, a German physicist discovered that, beyond the confines of the coloured spectrum, beyond even those ultra-violet rays of the dark spectrum, the chemical properties of which have long been recognized, there are still other radiations with very peculiar properties. These radiations are capable of increasing the intensity of all life-forces, and this to an extraordinary extent.

It had occurred to this new Prometheus that, if he were to capture the sun's rays by means of an enormous lens, he might extract the life-giving radiations and direct them into his orchard. Experience soon proved that the conclusions he had arrived at were correct. The method he adopted was not without a beauty of its own. Above the gardens, at the summit of a high tower, a gigantic convex disc, as transparent as crystal, turned upon an axis by means of clockwork, so as always to follow the course of the sun, the rays of which were thus concentrated in a dazzling focus of blinding brightness. This burning shaft of light was next directed on a prism, which spread over the whole centre of the garden all the colours of the rainbow. To add to the beauty of the place, fountains were placed in suitable positions, and their jets resembled large sheets of changing silk, the tints ranging from the brightest red to the deepest violet. The eye was thus delighted at the same time as the air was refreshed.

But it was when you looked at the vegetation surrounding you that admiration was lost in wonder. Everything was so arranged that the rays fell exactly where required, and the plants grew with an amazing exuberance, which no mere effect of climate could ever parallel. Orange-trees, with trunks twenty or twenty-five feet in girth, were bending under the weight of their golden fruit, which were as large as water-melons; vines, enlacing elm-trees, bore sumptuous bunches, of which each separate grape, black or yellow, was the size of an average orange. As for the ferns, they waved their spreading heads, as enormous as the feathery tops of date-palms. It was seriously contemplated to extend this marvellous method of cultivation to the entire island, which would then have resembled Paradise or the Garden of the Hesperides.

Alas! it was ordained that human ingenuity should go thus far and no farther, and I was destined to be a witness of the most lamentable catastrophe which, since the beginning of history, has ever discouraged progress.

One morning I was leaning out of my window, drinking in the delicious odours of the country, which were mingled with the strong perfume of the ocean, when I was not a little surprised to notice that the volcano was crowned with great wreaths of smoke. It reminded me of the steam which slightly raises the lid of a kettle. The air was gradually becoming moist and burning. Soon thick fog covered the entire island, quite shutting out the light of the sun. The streets were filled with excited, shouting people. Then the soil itself began to growl and tremble, as if some formidable dragon, after long slumbers, were awakening somewhere in the depths below.

Finally, with the tumult of an invasion, I saw an army of blacksmiths, covered with cinders, tearing through the streets, screaming something as they went that was incomprehensible to me.

I went out to join the crowd.

"An eruption! An eruption!"

The word of deadly meaning, uttered in accents of terror, passed from lip to lip. Stupefying news, confused reports, were being repeated by one and another. What I vaguely gathered was that there had been a

sudden increase in the strength of the central heat. Floods of burning lava had inundated the forges and driven away the workmen. At the foot of the mountain there was a heap of carbonized bodies. The steam I had seen was the entire contents of the great boiler, the great boiling lake which flashed into vapour almost in an instant.

Suddenly there was a terrific explosion. All through the fog there was a red glare. In place of the humid vapour a rain of cinders began to fall. Clouds of stones descended upon the houses, or crashed into the sea with the hissing of myriads of quenched firebrands. The volcano had resumed possession of its central chimney, and was sending forth great sheets of flame. It was at the same time dark and red, as it is during some great conflagration at the dead of night. There was an awful roar—a mad stampede.

The river of lava, with its ensanguined tongues, was sweeping through the town, burying human beings in its glowing waves. The earth shook ceaselessly. Here and there crevices opened, through which the imprisoned winds escaped with an awe-inspiring roar. At other spots, where the gases in the subsoil had combined to form detonating mixtures, there was a series of muffled roarings and explosions. Through a thousand fissures which had opened in the wind-caves the tempests were rushing forth, and under the cyclone the sea boiled and foamed in terrifying fury.

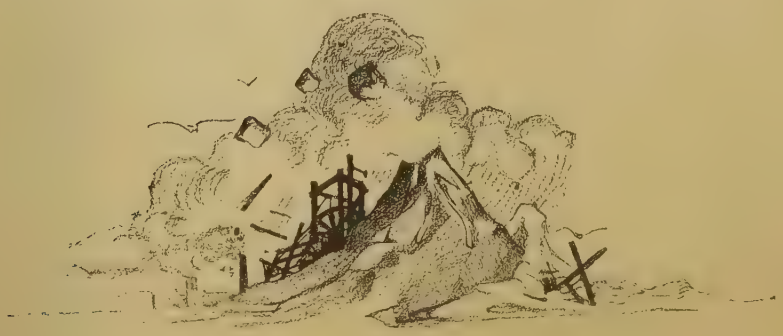
Before the advancing fire the desperate little group of which I was one had retired to the water's edge. Farther we could not go.

Then, away in the distance, we saw an awful sight. A monstrous wave, so stupendous that it seemed impossible to be real, a moving wall that reached to the very clouds, was advancing upon us. Whither was I to fly? My limbs were giving way. All round me I could see elusive shades rushing like ghosts through the smoke. I heard cries, shouts, and shrieks. Where was I? Where was the captain? I could see no one. I am certain I must have screamed, yet I did not hear the sound of my own voice.

It seemed as if the island were descending to the bottom of the ocean. The water was already up to my ankles—already I was in the sea! And always that great wave was coming on, with the speed of a horse at the gallop. Then, without warning, the foaming crest gave way. The immense wall of water fell. I closed my eyes. In my ears was the murmur of the mighty waters.

Once more Death had refused to take me. By the merest chance I became entangled amid some floating wreckage. A large steamer, on its way to Hong-Kong from Plymouth, itself flying before the tempest, picked me up, half dead, a poor waif, tossing on the sea—the sea which had swallowed up and hidden for ever the last trace of the magic island and its people.

—Translated by Alder Anderson.



Christmas Puzzles.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

IT was on a certain Christmas Eve, during a great snowstorm, that a small railway train running on an unimportant branch line in the North of England was brought to a standstill at the little station of B——. After a consultation had taken place amongst the station-master, engine-driver, and guard, the anxious passengers were informed that it might be several hours before the line could be got sufficiently clear for the train to proceed. Men were working at a large snow-drift in a cutting, and the best that was possible in the circumstances was being done. There was a large fire in the general waiting-room, and passengers were invited to go there and make themselves as comfortable as the conditions would allow. The genial station-master provided tea, coffee, and such light provisions as were obtainable, and the party was soon put in excellent spirits. But as time dragged on these spirits began to flag, and the station-master looked round for some means of providing entertainment for his impatient guests. Would anybody oblige with a song? No response. Would anybody favour us with a short recitation? No reply. Was there any gentleman present who could show us a few conjuring tricks? Such a gentleman was not forthcoming. Then the station-master knit his brows in thought, until somebody suggested to him that perhaps the way out of the perplexity was puzzles. It was a happy thought, and he smiled at the idea.

66.—THE STATION-MASTER'S LITTLE POSER.

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I will tell you a curious little thing that happened on this line a short time ago. An old lady entered a complaint against the ill-manners of our officials. She said, 'They are that saucy that there is no putting up with them.' While travelling to pay a visit to her married daughter, it seems she put her head out of the carriage window at a certain junction and inquired, 'How long do we wait here, guard?' She said that the impudent man merely replied, 'Too-too-too-too-too-too!' Though this trumpeting very much annoyed her, she repeated her inquiry at the next stop to another official: 'Why are we waiting here?' To her inexpressible indignation, the answer she received was, 'Faw-faw-faw-faw-faw-faw.' She wrote a letter of complaint to the manager of the line, but he assured her that the two replies were quite satisfactory and polite if properly understood. Now, can any of you tell me what they really mean?"

Many of the passengers were very perplexed until the station-master explained. Can you guess his explanation?

67.—LONDON AND YORK.

"THAT reminds me," said an elderly gentleman with side-whiskers, "of another railway poser. A train left London for York at twelve midnight, and another train left York for London at the same time."

There was a pause, while several passengers produced a pencil and a piece of paper or old envelope for calculations.

"Now, the train from London went at the uniform speed of forty miles an hour, while the average speed of the York train was fifty miles an hour, only the York train had two stops of ten minutes each. Which train was nearest to London when they met? "

"Pardon me," said a young man in the corner, "but can you not first tell us the distance from London to York? "

"Quite unnecessary," said the elderly gentleman.

A clerical gentleman, apparently a dean, was heard to mutter, "Call London train x and York train y; then——" But the rest was lost, for first one and then another began to laugh loudly, until everybody in turn had caught on to the point of the problem and the merriment was quite general. What were they laughing at?

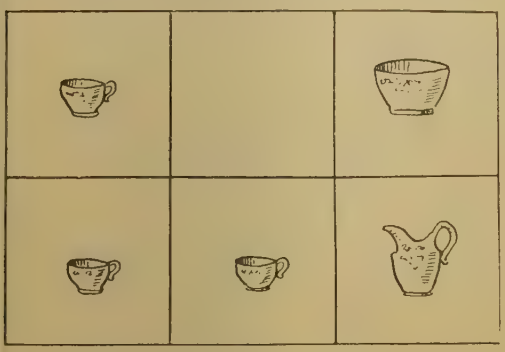
68.—A PAVEMENT PUZZLE.

"I DON'T know much about railways," said a red-haired man near the door. "I'm a stonemason by trade, and here's a little thing that bothered me last week. Two floors had to be paved with stones, each a foot square. The number of stones in both was two thousand one hundred and twenty, but each side of one floor was twelve feet more than each side of the other floor. What were the dimensions of the two floors? "

"What stone was it, guv'nor? " asked a workingman humorist, but the stonemason did not reply; he merely looked.

69.—THE TEA-SERVICE PUZZLE.

AT this point a youth who appeared to be an art student said that he had just remembered a puzzle that might entertain the company. Placing a large railway poster face downwards on the table, he divided its surface with a pencil into six squares, in which he placed three tea-cups, a sugar-basin, and a milk-jug, in the positions shown in our illustration.



"Now," he said, "the puzzle is to make the basin and the jug change places in the fewest possible moves. You may move the articles one at a time to the square that is vacant for the time being, but not diagonally or by leaping over one another. In fact, you move them just as if they were chess rooks."

This puzzle was found very entertaining, and nearly everybody who made the attempt succeeded in making the exchange, but it is an interesting fact that not one of the passengers managed to do it in the fewest possible moves. How many moves would the reader have required? We have found it quite a fascinating little poser.

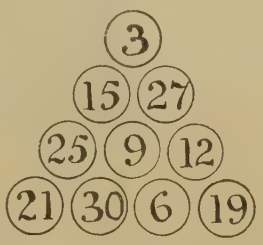
70.—THE POST-OFFICE CLERK'S DILEMMA.

"I SUPPOSE in every walk of life," said a young lady passenger, "we have our little perplexities. I am a counter clerk in a post-office, and I must confess that some of the requests that we receive from the public are quite perplexing. I will give the company an example of the sort of thing we are sometimes asked to do. A gentleman came into our office one day and threw a crown-piece on the counter with the remark, 'Be so good as to give me some twopenny stamps, six times as many penny stamps, and make up the rest of the money in twopence-halfpenny stamps.' Now, how was I to perform this little feat? "

This simple little question gave considerable trouble to a good many of the party.

71.—THE FIFTY PUZZLE.

THE guard of the delayed train next produced from



his pocket ten white enamelled discs with numbers on them. They were number-plates, or something of the sort, from railway carriages: we forget exactly what he called them. Placing these on the table in the form of a triangle, he said:—

"Who will be first to select three of these that will add up to fifty? "

One passenger called out: "12, 6, and 30 make 48," but almost immediately another shouted "9, 21, and 19 make 49," which was better. Then, after a pause, a third person said, "3, 27, and 21 make 51," which was just as good as the last, as its difference from 50 was 1 only. Then somebody (we think it was the art student) discovered three numbers that made exactly fifty, and he won. Can the reader find the three numbers?

72.—THE LABOURER'S QUESTION.

"IF you'll excuse a labouring man," said a smart-looking fellow in the corner, with quite unnecessary diffidence, "I should like to be so bold as to ask a question. A chap I know was hired on a job by a cranky sort of gentleman for a year. For every day he worked he was to get seven shillings, but for every day he was idle he was to lose three shillings. At the end of the time he had nothing to receive, his fines being exactly equal to his earnings. Now, what bothers me is to find out just how many days the chap worked and how many days he idled."

"Were there three hundred and sixty-five days in the year? " somebody asked.

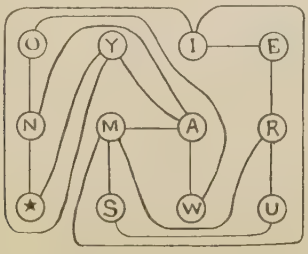
"Yes," said the man; "and Sundays counted just the same as week-days."

Several pencils came into play, and three of the company produced the correct answer almost at the same moment.

73.—A NEW MOTOR-CAR PUZZLE.

THE person who next came forward was a gentleman who informed the company that he was an enthusiastic motorist, though the present state of the roads was not well adapted to the pursuit of his favourite pastime. He produced from his pocket a plan, of which we give a facsimile.

"This little problem was propounded to me lately," he said. "The circles are supposed to be towns, and all the good roads are indicated by lines. The puzzle is to start from the town with a star and reach town E, after visiting every other town once, and once



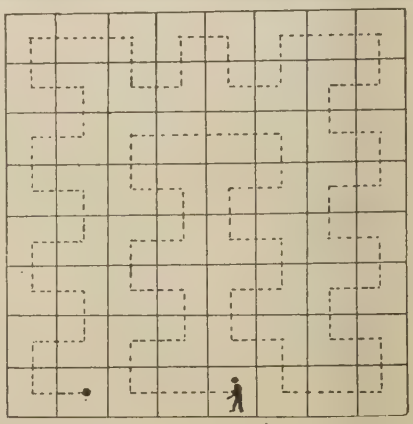
only. I have not yet found a route. In fact, I handed the puzzle to a friend of mine (an enthusiastic puzzlist) a day or two ago, and just as I was coming away to-day I received this wire from him: 'No way, I'm sure.' Perhaps the company can tell me whether or not he is correct. Is there any way of doing it?"

He did not get his answer, because just at that moment the guard returned to the room and called out: "Now, ladies and gentlemen, take your seats quickly, please! We are just going on!" The waiting-room immediately emptied and we all made for our seats, surprised, on looking at our watches, to learn how long a time we had been kept waiting at the station. Curiously enough, nobody was heard to complain of the delay.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

62.—A DUNGEON PUZZLE.

IF the prisoner takes the route shown in the diagram—where, for the sake of clearness to the eye, the doors are omitted—he will succeed in visiting



every cell once, and only once, in as many as fifty-seven straight lines.

63.—MATE IN TWO MOVES.

THE key move is Bishop to Queen's fourth. Then whatever Black may play he can be checkmated next move.

64.—MRS. TIMPKINS'S AGE.

THE age of the younger at marriage is always the same as the number of years that expire before the elder becomes twice her age, if he was three times as old at marriage. In our case it was eighteen years afterwards; therefore Mrs. Timpkins was eighteen years of age on the wedding-day, and her husband fifty four.

65.—THE CONE PUZZLE.

THE simple rule is that the cone must be cut at one-third of its altitude. The rest is obvious.

A New Bridge Problem.

By Wladimir de Rozing.

Hearts—Knave, 4, 3.
Diamonds—Ace, queen, knave, 5.
Clubs—Queen, 10, 5.
Spades—Ace, queen, 5.

Hearts—9, 7, 6.
Diamonds—10, 8, 7, 3, 2.
Clubs—Knave, 3, 2.
Spades—6, 2.

A
Z Y
B

Hearts—King, queen, 5.
Diamonds—King, 9.
Clubs—King, 8, 7, 4.
Spades—King, 10, 8, 7.

Hearts—Ace, 10, 8, 2.
Diamonds—6, 4.
Clubs—Ace, 9, 6.
Spades—Knave, 9, 4, 3.

A deals and declares No Trumps. Y leads 7 of spades. A and B are to make eleven tricks.

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S BRIDGE PROBLEM.

A	Y	B	Z
Diamonds kve	Diamonds 4	Hearts 3	Diamonds 2
Diamonds 10	Spades 3 !	Hearts 4	Diamonds 5
Diamonds 8	Spades 6	Spades king !	Diamonds 6
Hearts 8	Hearts king	Hearts ace	Hearts 2
Spades 2	Hearts 7	Spades 7 !	Spades 8
Clubs 7	Clubs 4	Hearts 5	Clubs 2
Clubs 9	Clubs 5	Hearts 6	Clubs 3
Spades 5	Hearts 9	Hearts 10	Clubs 6
Spades 4	Hearts queen	Hearts knave	Clubs 8

The winning card in each trick is underlined.

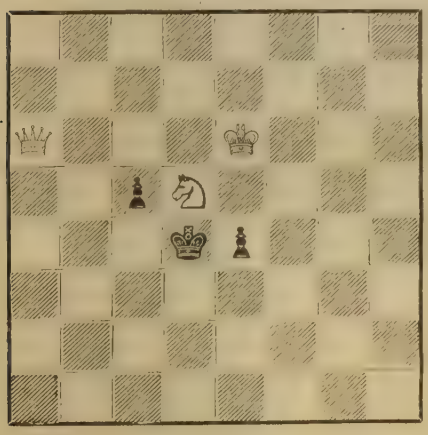
A CHESS CURIOSITY.

By T. B. ROWLAND.

INCREDIBLE as it may appear, it is quite possible to produce nearly a score of different problems from the one setting of a few selected chessmen. Take, for instance, the above position, and place it on the chessboard so that the White king occupies K 6 and the other men relatively. This gives :—

PROBLEM No. 1.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

It looks simple enough, yet some difficulty will be experienced in solving it ; but when the solution is found, the solver will be rewarded by the pretty symmetrical mate in the main variation.

Now move the position one square to the right, and we have :—

PROBLEM No. 2.

A three-mover, the composition of which is claimed by B. G. Laws, a London composer.

This position again moved one square to the right gives :—

PROBLEM No. 3.

Another three-mover, yet altogether different to the others. It is by L. H. Jokisch, a German composer, and will also be found difficult to solve.

Move this position one square down, bringing the White king to K Kt 5 and the other men to their relative squares, and we get :—

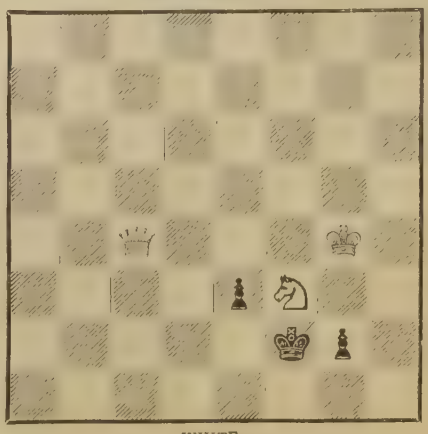
PROBLEM No. 4.

White to play and mate in three moves.

Moved one square down again gives :—

PROBLEM No. 5.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

This is an easy problem to solve, and would hardly gain a prize in a tourney. However, it is unlike any of the others. Now, without in any way moving the position, it produces three other three-movers. The *modus operandi* is—first, give the chessboard half a turn to the right, and we have :—

PROBLEM No. 6.

White to play and mate in three moves.

Give the board another half a turn to the right, and we get :—

PROBLEM No. 7.

White to play and mate in three moves.

Another half-turn of the board to the right gives :—

PROBLEM No. 8.

White to play and mate in three moves.

This does not exhaust the possibilities of the position, for by placing it so that the White king occupies K R 7—*i.e.*, No. 3 moved one square diagonally up towards the right—we have :—

PROBLEM No. 9.

White to play and mate in three moves.

Placed thus, we have two problems, as the first and second moves of the solution may be transposed. Bringing this position one square to the left gives us :—

PROBLEM No. 10.

White to play and mate in four moves.

Finally, place the position so that the White king is on K B 5 and the other men on their relative squares, and we get :—

PROBLEM No. 11.

White to play and mate in four moves.

This gives three other four-move problems, by giving the board half a turn at a time as we did with No. 5.

The solutions are withheld until next issue, in order that our readers may solve the problems for themselves. Then we hope to give further instances of the possibilities of a set position.

The series of stories commencing in this number are specially translated for English boys and girls from a volume of the best Russian Wonder Tales selected by command of the Czar for the use of his own children.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

SCHMAT-RAZUM

BEFORE our grandfathers had learned anything, before their grandfathers were born, there was, in the Court of the Czar of a far empire, a young bowman named Taraban, who was the cleverest of all the royal archers. Each day he went hunting in the fens and marshes for wild swans for the palace table, and one evening, as he wandered with his bow and arrows, he saw seven white ducks with silver wings resting beneath a tree. So beautiful were they that he would not shoot them, but when they flew away followed them afoot, thinking: "Perhaps when they alight again I may catch one alive." The ducks alighted on the shore of the ocean, and there they laid aside their silver wings and, becoming transformed into lovely maidens, threw themselves into the water and began to bathe.

The archer crept noiselessly near and, without being seen, took the silver wings of the one he thought the most beautiful, and hid himself.

Presently the damsels finished their bathing and, coming from the water, ran to put on their silver wings, and behold one pair was missing. Then she who owned them called to the others and said: "Fly abroad, my little sisters! Fly abroad and linger not for me! I must stay and search for my wings."

The six maidens thereupon put on their silver wings and, turning again to white ducks, flew away over the ocean, while the one who remained began to weep. Weeping, she cried: "Show yourself, I pray, you who have evilly taken my silver wings. If you are a girl, I will be a sister to you. If warrior or lady, I will be your daughter. And if a youth, I will be your wife. Only give me back my silver wings!"

When Taraban heard her words he was filled with pity and, showing himself at once, gave her the wings. "I would not cause you grief or sorrow, damsel," he said. "Take them and be free for all of me. And for your tears I ask your forgiveness."

Then the maiden looked on him wonderingly and said: "You speak right kindly, though I have been taught that men were hard and cruel. Nevertheless, a word given cannot be recalled, and if you are so minded I will marry you."

The archer rejoiced, and kissed and caressed her, and he took her to the capital and they were married. Then Taraban bethought himself of his duty, and went to the palace and prostrated himself before the Czar.

"Health to you, my best bowman!" said the Czar. "What would you ask?"

"O your Majesty," he said, "I am guilty before you! I have wedded a wife without your royal permission."

"Well," said the Czar, "your fault is not a great one. Come hither to-morrow, however, and bring your wife, that she may salute me."

So next day Taraban brought his wife to the palace, and her beauty was such that it made the other ladies of the Court look like crows. The Czar could not gaze sufficiently at her, and the instant she had gone felt himself seized with a violent love for her. He sent in hot haste for his Court Ministers, his Boyars, and his great Generals, and said: "Here are the keys of my royal treasury. Take as much gold as you require to search throughout the four corners of the world. Only fetch me, to become my Czarina, such another beauty as the wife of my archer!"

The Boyars and Councillors had, perforce, to go upon the highway to search. While they were thus engaged a ragged beggar approached them. "Why are you so cast down, O Boyars and gentlemen?" he asked.

"Get you gone!" they said.

"Best not to drive me away," the beggar replied. "Rather give me a piece of gold, and I will point you out the road of cleverness."

Thereupon one of them gave him a piece of gold, when he crossed himself and said: "O Boyars and gentlemen, well do I know your quest. However, another maiden as lovely as the wife of Taraban the archer you will not find in the whole world. Sooner will beards grow from the palms of your hands. It is of no use to search for her, and as the Czar will be satisfied with nothing less, your heads will pay for your failure. Go back, therefore, to the Czar and bid him command the archer to journey across three times nine lands to the little forest monster Muzhichek, who is as high as a man's knee, with moustaches seven miles long, and to bring hither his invisible servant, Schmat-Razum, who lives in his master's pocket and does all that he orders him. Bid the Czar demand this of the archer, and he shall have his will. For while Muzhichek indeed exists, no man can find his dwelling nor perceive his invisible servant, and Taraban will wander all his life long, though he live for ever, without accomplishing the task, and the Czar may have his beautiful wife."

The Boyars and Ministers were rejoiced. They loaded the beggar with gold, and, returning to the palace, advised the Czar to act upon this counsel, and he, being cruel and wicked of heart, did so. He summoned the archer and said:—

"Taraban, my well-beloved bowman, and best of my archers! On account of your loyalty I have chosen you for an especial service. Across three times nine lands dwells the forest monster, Muzhichek, who is as high as a man's knee, with moustaches seven miles long. Bring to me his servant, Schmat-Razum, who lives in his pocket, and you shall be chief of all my Boyars. But as you love your life, mind you return not without him!"

The archer went home in great distress, and his wife, noticing his sorrowful look, asked: "What has saddened you? Have you had an unfriendly word from the Czar? Or, perchance, do I no longer please you?"

"You please me only too well, my dearest

wife," he answered; "but your beauty now has brought ruin upon me!"

She besought him to tell what had befallen, and when he had told her, she said: "The Czar is indeed your prime enemy, and has set you a grievous task, and there is no one in the world who can aid you, unless it be my little mother. I will send you to her for advice."

Then she gave Taraban a crystal ball and a silken handkerchief.

"After you are well out of the city," she said, "throw this ball upon the ground, and follow whither it rolls. It will lead you to my little mother. As for the handkerchief, as often as you wash, dry your face upon it and upon no other."

So the archer bade her farewell, and set out. He threw down the ball, which rolled always before him, and it led him across three times nine countries, till he had journeyed for the space of a whole year.

Now, when he had been absent three months the Czar called his Ministers and said: "The archer has been gone a fourth part of a year, and no doubt he will never return. I see not why I should wait longer. Go, therefore, and bring his wife to the palace."

They went accordingly, and brought her to him, and he straightway began to speak endearing words to her; but she repulsed him, and cried out upon him, saying:—

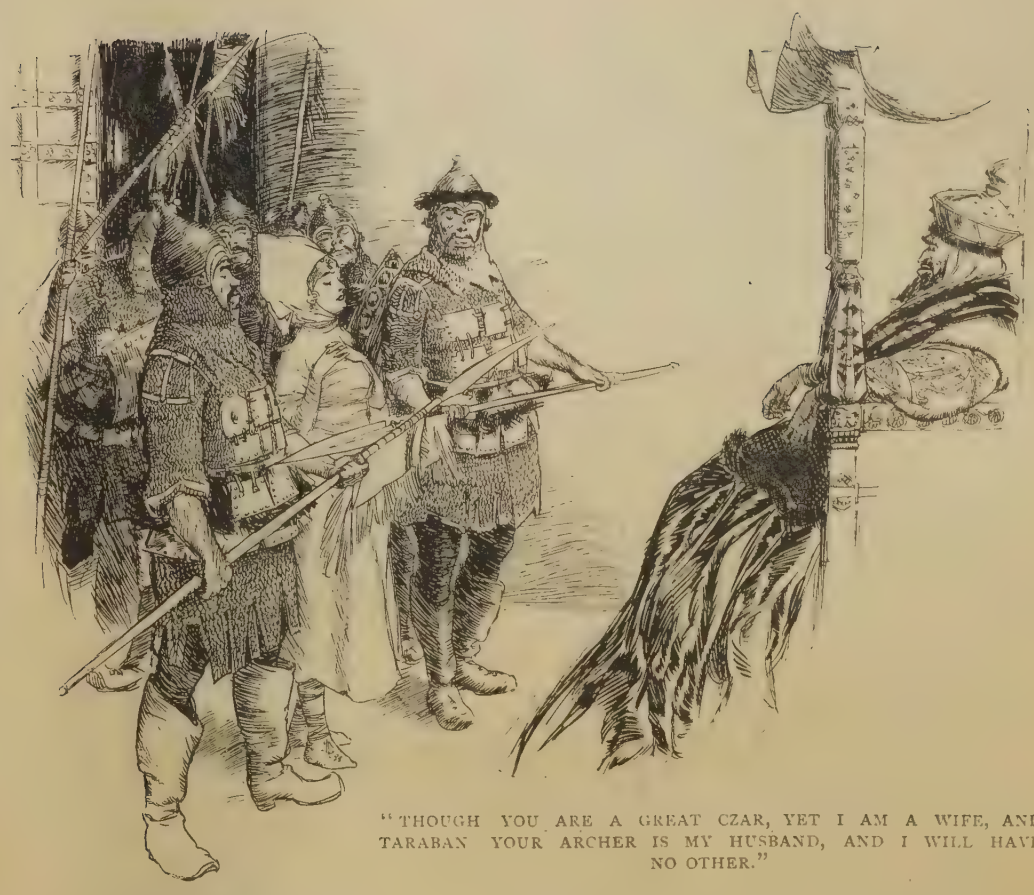
"Though you are a great Czar, yet I am a wife, and Taraban your archer is my husband, and I will have no other!"

"If you will not love me willingly, then will I compel you!" swore the Czar, and bade them build a square tower beside the ocean, and, shutting her within it, locked its door with seven locks, and surrounded it with soldiers and with ships till she should look kindly upon him.

"SHE BESOUGHT HIM TO TELL WHAT HAD BEFALLEN."

As for the archer, when he had journeyed a year, following the crystal ball, he reached a vast and splendid palace, to whose gate the ball led him. He entered, and there met him six lovely damsels, who greeted him kindly, and, seeing that he was travel-worn and wearied, gave him food and drink, and made him lie down and rest.

When he rose they brought him a golden wash-basin and an embroidered towel, but the towel he would not use, drying his face



"THOUGH YOU ARE A GREAT CZAR, YET I AM A WIFE, AND TARABAN YOUR ARCHER IS MY HUSBAND, AND I WILL HAVE NO OTHER."

on the handkerchief he carried with him. No sooner did he show this, however, than they looked at it and cried: "This handkerchief we know! Where did you obtain it?"

"It was given me by my wife," he replied.

"Then you have wedded our little sister!" they exclaimed, and led him to their mother, where she sat in a silver chair. To her he recounted how he had won his wife, and how they had lived happily together till the Czar had sent him on his present quest.

The old mother said: "My dear son-in-law, I have lived nine-tenths of my life on this earth, and I indeed know of Muzhichek, the forest monster, but where he lives I cannot tell, and never have I heard of his servant Schmat-Razum. Perhaps, however, I may discover for you where he may be found." Then going to a balcony which overlooked the land, she cried with a piping voice: "Hark, all ye beasts and creeping things! Come hither!" And at once there came hastening from all sides every kind of beast and reptile till the ground was black with them. "O ye, my friends, who run and creep everywhere in all lands," she cried, "have ye ever heard of Schmat-Razum?" And all answered in one voice: "No, we have never heard of him."

She sent them away to their jungles and thickets, when an aged frog, who, from lameness, had arrived behind the others, hopped forward and said: "I have heard of Schmat-Razum, the servant of Muzhichek, the forest monster. His master lives on a mountain in a forest in the Empire of Czar Zmey, and the forest I know well. But it is at the very end of the world, and I cannot travel so far in less than fifty years."

The old mother bade her daughters fetch a jar of milk and put into it the frog and gave it to the archer. "Take this with you," she said, "and the frog will show you the road." So Taraban took the jar and came at length to the empire of Czar Zmey, where was a mountain covered with a forest. He ascended the mountain, and at its very top was an iron door. "Now, good youth," said the frog, "this door is the entrance to the cavern

which is the abode of Muzhichek. As to Schmat-Razum, his servant, go with God, for I cannot aid you!"

The archer thanked the frog, set the jar on the soft moss, and, opening the iron door, entered the cavern. Within it was dark enough to put one's eyes out. Groping about, he found under a table an empty chest in which he hid himself and waited to see what would happen.

He lay there one hour, he waited another, and a third, when suddenly there came a rumbling from without, the door was nearly torn from its hinges, and in came the forest monster. He was as high as a man's knee, had swine's bristles for hair, and his moustaches, seven miles long, floated far out of the cavern behind him.

Muzhichek sat himself down at the table and thundered: "Ho! Schmat-Razum! Out of my pocket and fetch me my supper!" Instantly lamps lit themselves on the walls, plates laid themselves on the table covered with cooked flesh and fowl of every description, and bottles of wine appeared and poured their contents into goblets. The forest monster ate and drank to surfeit, making a noise like a mill, till there was nothing left. Then he shouted: "Ho! Schmat-Razum! Clear my table!" And immediately the empty plates and goblets disappeared and the lamps on the walls went out. Muzhichek then bade him remain and keep his house for him till his return, and rushed away down the mountain.

The archer crept out of the chest, and seating himself at the table, shouted: "Ho! Schmat-Razum! Bring me food and drink!" At once the lamps reappeared and the table was spread as before. Then he said: "Ho! Schmat-Razum! You should be hungry too. Sit down and eat and drink with me."

Then, though Taraban saw no one, a voice answered him and said: "Whence come you, good youth? For three times nine years have I served my master here, and never has he asked me to sup with him as you do!"

"Nevertheless, Schmat-Razum," said the archer, "sit down. Perhaps I like your company better than your master does."

He began to eat and drink, and opposite him the plates and wineglasses emptied themselves, so that he knew the invisible servant was also eating and drinking. When the meal was finished, the archer said: "Ho! Schmat-Razum! it seems to me your master, the forest monster, does not use you too well. Will you be my servant instead? I will not use you worse."

"I will," answered the other. "I am right tired of this cavern. I see you are a good companion besides."

"Come with me at once, then," said the archer, "for my home is far away."

He left the cavern, picked up the jar with the frog, and shouted for his servant. "Here I am, master," said a voice at his elbow. "You cannot see me, yet I shall be ever by you to execute your commands."

Taraban set out, and made such good speed that, even had Muzhichek known what direction his servant had taken, he would have had trouble enough to overtake him. They came to the deserted land where stood the splendid palace, and rested there three weeks, and Schmat-Razum feasted the archer and his mother-in-law and her six daughters every day. Taraban left there the aged frog, whom the old mother promised for her services three jars of fresh milk every nine days for ever. Then, with his invisible servant, Taraban set out again for his own empire.

He journeyed six months without stopping, and at the end of that time was so wearied that he could scarcely set one foot before the other, and at length he sank down on the ground, saying: "Schmat-Razum, my faithful servant! You must find another master, for I am utterly exhausted, and I fear me I shall never see my own empire and my dear wife again!"

"Why did you not tell me you were wearied?" said Schmat-Razum; "I will carry you as far and as swiftly as you desire!" And instantly Taraban felt himself lifted as if by a whirlwind, and borne through the air with such exceeding swiftness that he could scarcely see the rivers and forests, the towns and villages, flying past. Presently he perceived far beneath him the waves of the blue sea, and there their pace slackened, and Schmat-Razum said: "Master, will you not bid me here make you a resting-place?"

"Do so," said Taraban; and at once there was a mighty whirlpool in the sea below, and a green island appeared clothed with a fragrant wood. At its edge was a garden full of flowers of seven colours and glowing shrubbery, and in the garden was a golden summer-house, with silken awnings of many hues, and windows looking out over the sea. They descended, and Schmat-Razum said: "Rest here, master, I pray you, and refresh yourself for some days, and then we will resume our journey."

So there they rested. Next day a merchant vessel came sailing by, and the ship's master saw the island and put in near shore

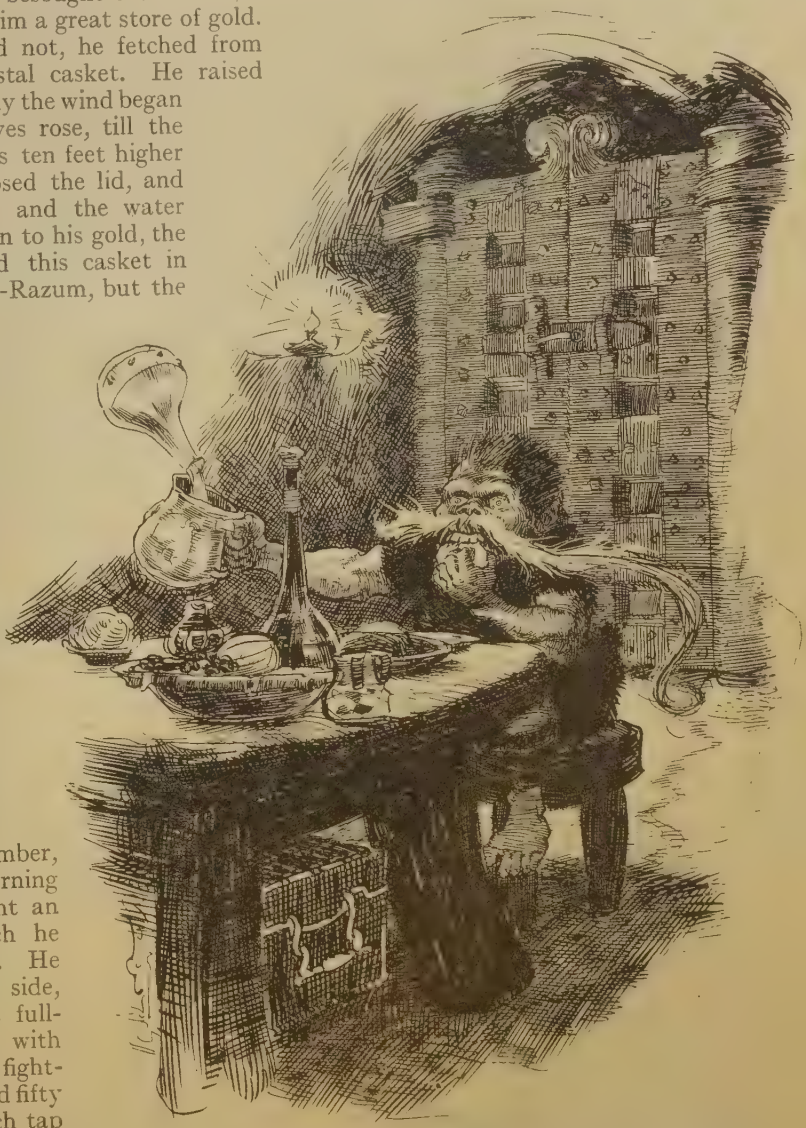
and cast anchor. Taraban welcomed him, took him into his golden summer-house, and brought him a stool to sit upon. "Abide here," he said, "and divert yourself with me for a season, for there is no one with me save my servant here."

The shipman said: "But I see no servant."

"You shall presently understand," said the archer, and called: "Ho! Schmat-Razum! bring hither wine and savoury meats!" and immediately a table was spread with all kinds of delicacies. The master of the ship was much astonished, and admired greatly the invisible servant, and for the space of a whole day besought the archer to sell him, offering for him a great store of gold. When Taraban would not, he fetched from his ship a little crystal casket. He raised its lid, and immediately the wind began to blow and the waves rose, till the level of the water was ten feet higher than before; he closed the lid, and the waves grew still and the water subsided. In addition to his gold, the ship's master offered this casket in exchange for Schmat-Razum, but the archer would not.

The next day a second ship came sailing across the ocean and stopped at the island. It carried a rich merchant, who had himself rowed ashore in a skiff, and, like the first, was welcomed by Taraban. He, too, desired the invisible servant, and for two days tried to persuade the archer to sell him. He offered for him a heap of precious stones without number, and at length, returning to his ship, brought an earthen bowl, which he offered in exchange. He tapped the bowl's side, and it produced a full-rigged ship-of-war, with all its sailors and fighting men. He tapped fifty times, and with each tap it brought forth a like ship, with sails spread and mariners and soldiers in their places, till a fleet of fifty lay off the island. Then he turned the bowl upside down, and ships and men at once disappeared. But the archer would not exchange Schmat-Razum for the magic bowl.

While both ships lay at anchor there came a third vessel, bearing a trader from a distant kingdom, and he, too, came to rest on the island. So much did he desire to possess the archer's servant that, after he had bargained for the space of three days, he offered Taraban the value of his whole ship's cargo; and when that did not suffice, he drew from his pocket a golden horn, which he offered in addition.



"THE FOREST MONSTER ATE AND DRANK TO SURFEIT, MAKING A NOISE LIKE A MILL, TILL THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT."

He blew into one end of it, and instantly a great host appeared, both horsemen and foot-men, with spears and armour shining like gold. The officers of the host waved their bright swords and the musicians played warlike music, and the foot-soldiers marched and the troopers galloped past; then the trader blew into its other end, and all in an instant vanished. But neither for the wonderful horn would Taraban give up his servant Schmat-Razum.

Now, the three vessels prepared to put out to sea, and presently Schmat-Razum came to the archer and said: "Master, your three guests, the captain, the merchant, and the trader, purpose to do you ill. Just now I heard them plotting together how they may slay you, because you will not trade me to them. Now exchange me, I pray you, for the casket, the bowl, and the horn, and let them take me away. For at any moment you desire me I will return."

Accordingly Taraban went to the three men and said: "Your wonders seemed to me to be less than mine, but it has occurred to me that with fleets and hosts I can take high service under some Czar, and fighting is my trade. So, if you will agree to give me your three wonders in exchange for him, you may have my servant."

The three conferred together. "It is much," they said; "but, after all, we are merchantmen, and of what use to us are high tides, hosts, and ships of war? With Schmat-Razum, however, we may live together in plenty all our lives, and have whatever our hearts desire."

So they gave the archer the casket, the bowl, and the horn, and he bade Schmat-Razum go with them, and they boarded one of their vessels and sailed away in company across the blue sea.

For three days they regaled their crews, and themselves feasted royally, drinking their fill each night and sleeping heavily, while the archer sat alone in the golden summer-house on the island. On the fourth evening, Taraban, finding loneliness sit heavily upon him, sighed and said to himself:—

"Oh, Schmat-Razum, my faithful servant! How long will it be before I hear your voice again?"

And at that moment Schmat-Razum replied at his elbow: "Here I am, master; I only waited your call."

The archer rejoiced. "It is time for us to go to my own empire," he said. And in a twinkling island and summer-house vanished and the whirlwind lifted him and bore him away.

Next morning the captain, the merchant, and the trader awoke on the vessel. "Ho! Schmat-Razum!" they cried. "Bring us a cooling drink!" But there was no answer, and the service was not rendered. They ran hither and thither, and shouted and bawled, but the invisible servant was gone. In anger they put about and returned to the place where the archer's island had been, but no trace of it could they find. Then they said to one another: "This was a magician, and he has cheated and fooled us! May the devil take him!" And, weeping and lamenting, they spread their sails and departed, each in a different direction.

Meanwhile, the archer was carried by the whirlwind across the ocean to his own kingdom, and there on the shore he perceived the square tower which the Czar had built, surrounded by its ships and soldiers.

"Leave me here, Schmat-Razum," he said, "and go and see who is guarded in that tower."

He felt himself set gently on the sea-beach, and presently Schmat-Razum returned and said: "Master, some lovely princess sits in the tower's upper chamber, bemoaning the absence of her husband, whom the Czar has sent across three times nine lands, because he desires to possess her himself."

"It is doubtless my own lovely wife!" the archer exclaimed, and sent his servant to her with a message bidding her be of good cheer. Then he ordered Schmat-Razum to take him to the Czar's palace, and at once was set down under the royal windows.

There he lifted his voice and cried: "O wicked Czar! You stealer of your subjects' wives! Come out to me that I, your archer, may tell you to your face what you are!"

The captain of the guard, hearing this, thought him mad, and sent a soldier to seize him, but the soldier Schmat-Razum overthrew in an instant. The captain sent a squad, and them also he stretched on the ground like sheaves of barley, while the archer did not so much as lift a hand, but continued to shout against the Czar.

Hearing the uproar, the Czar himself at length came to the window, and seeing the archer, and hearing his words, waxed exceeding wroth. "Will you suffer this insolent bowman," he cried, "to revile me before my own palace?". And he sent in haste for his soldiers. They assembled, but as they came the archer took his golden horn and blew it, and at once the invincible host appeared,

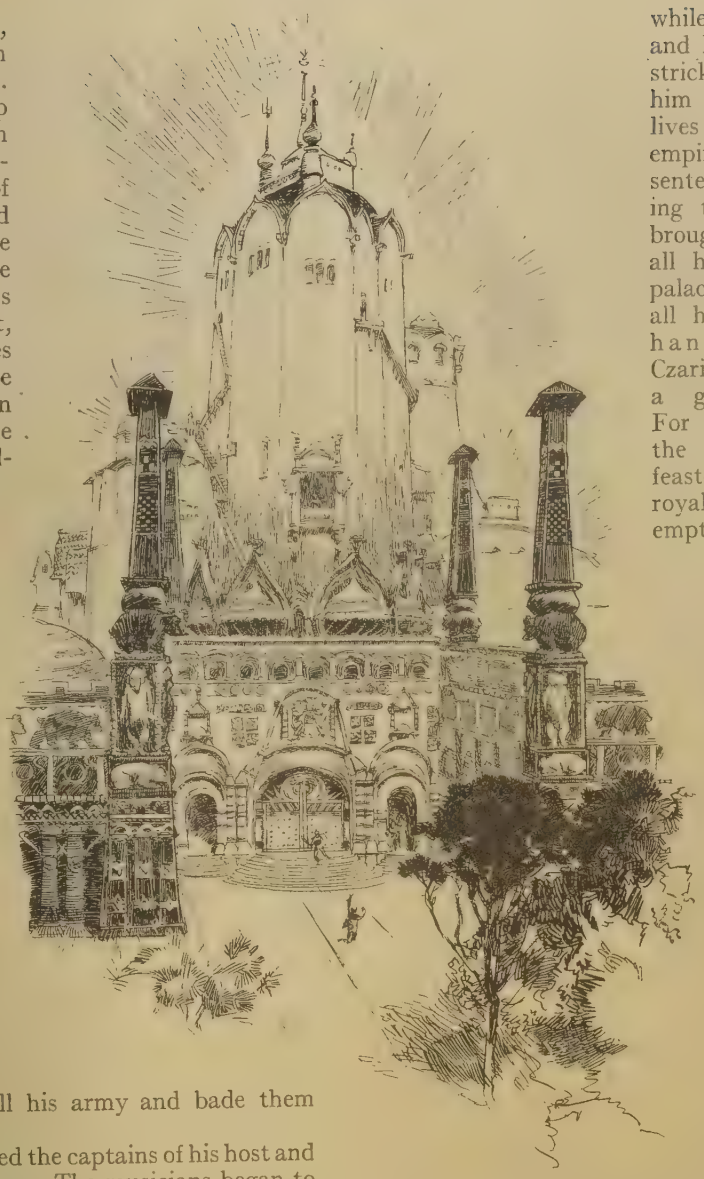
norse and foot, glittering in bright armour. He began to rap on his earthen bowl, and instantly ships of war appeared along all the coast. He opened his crystal casket, and the waves rose and the water lifted ten feet, so that the ships came sailing up to the very walls of the capital.

The watchman sitting on the Czar's watch-towers cried to those beneath that a hundred war-ships had arrived under sail and were coming to attack the capital, and they hastened to tell the Czar.

Furious, he mounted his horse and rode out at the head of all his army and bade them open battle.

Taraban called the captains of his host and gave them orders. The musicians began to play, and the horses to chafe and fume, the drummers beat their drums, and the horsemen and footmen moved forward like a great river. Nothing could stop them. The enchanted swords cut down the Czar's men like grain, and the gleaming spears pierced through their armour, so that soon all his army was in flight. The Czar himself was caught between the two forces, dashed from his horse, and trampled to death in an instant.

Then the archer called together his host, while the Ministers and Boyars, terror-stricken, besought him to spare their lives and rule the empire. He consented, and, marching to the tower, brought his wife in all honour to the palace, where, when all had kissed her hand as their Czarina, he ordered a great festival. For three weeks the whole realm feasted, till the royal bins were empty and the cellars ran dry, while the host encamped round about the capital and the ships of war flocked under its walls.



"THERE HE LIFTED HIS VOICE AND CRIED: 'O WICKED CZAR! YOU STEALER OF YOUR SUBJECTS' WIVES!'"

On the twenty-first night, at midnight, Taraban went to his chamber, turned upside down the earthen bowl, blew into the golden horn, and closed the casket, and at the same moment the sea receded, the great host and the fleet of warships vanished, and all was as before.

So Taraban, the archer, began his reign, and his rule was wise and terrible. He subdued other kingdoms and had many children, and lived in joy all the days of his life, with his Czarina and his faithful servant, Schmat-Razum.

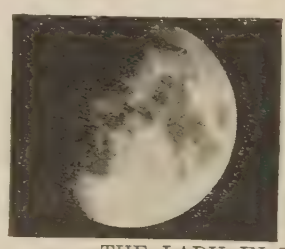
CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

STEEPLEJACK'S DARING FEAT.

THE people of New York not long ago were treated to a somewhat unusual and certainly daring acrobatic performance. Samuel Hughes, a well-known steeplejack, climbed the flagpole on the City Hall dome, taking his seven-year-old son Edward with him. Hughes first tied himself to the pole and then placed a rope around his son's body. He was near the top of the pole, some hundred and fifty feet from the ground, when to the astonishment of the spellbound spectators the steeplejack swung from the pole with his legs tied, and, holding the boy by the wrists, allowed him to dangle in space. After remaining in this position for a few minutes the boy

turned a complete somersault between his father's arms, then swung loose with one hand, and performed other equally startling feats. When he descended and was asked if he was not frightened, he merely replied, "No, because I was with father." The fact is, it was by no means the first time the boy has climbed to such dizzy heights. Only two weeks before he ascended the steeple of St. John's Lutheran Church in Brooklyn. This youthful aerial acrobat certainly possesses his father's nerve, and promises to be as daring as any steeplejack when he grows up. —Mr. H. J. Shepstone, 35, Amner Road, Clapham Common, S.W.



THE LADY IN THE MOON.

WE may suppose that every reader of THE STRAND MAGAZINE has heard of the man in the moon, but can this be said in regard to another figure visible on the moon's surface, viz., the lady in the moon? It was not until a year or two ago that this figure was detected, and it is a matter of no small wonder that it was not seen before, as it is a most striking and easily-seen figure. It represents the head of a lady with her hair done in the latest Paris fashion, and the above photograph, with the sketch, will furnish the reader with a clue which will enable him to find the figure with ease. The best time to look for the lady is just after half moon, although she may be seen at any time from half moon until after full.—Mr. Ellison Hawks, 10, Grange Terrace, Leeds.

A CURIOUS GOLFING INCIDENT.

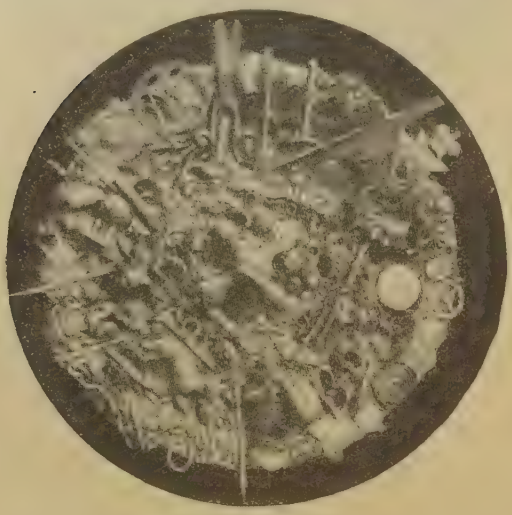
THE incident depicted in the photograph below is no fake. It actually happened to Miss Chris Leitch, sister of the well-known golfer, while playing on the links at Silloth. Approaching rather too strongly to one of the greens, her ball, after bouncing once or twice, lodged firmly in the ring at the top of the flagstick, from which very awkward "lie" Miss Leitch was obliged to play it in the manner shown in the photograph. Had Miss Leitch managed to hole out with this emergency shot, the incident would have been doubly unique. She could not, however, do more than dislodge the ball, eventually holing out in the orthodox fashion. Happily a camera was at hand and it was possible to perpetuate what was surely an unprecedented incident. — Mr. Eustace E. White, Weston-super-Mare Golf Club, Somerset.

PERFORMING TURTLES.

OF all living creatures the turtle is undoubtedly the slowest in its movement and probably possesses the least brain. Yet a well-known American naturalist has succeeded in training three of these creatures to do a number of little tricks. He places them, one above the other, on spools, as depicted in the photograph given above. If a piece of cabbage or other green stuff is held out in front of them, they will make a complete circuit, all moving in unison, keeping their balance and not tumbling off. The bigger turtle will also ring a bell. This it grasps in one of its fore-feet, jerks it off the ground, and then gives it a shake. It is quite amusing to watch the slow, deliberate manner in which this is done. The turtles have always lived in their owner's house, spending their time in the kitchen hunting down the vermin. The second photograph, which was sent to us by Mr. Wallace L. Jenkins, 122, Windermere Road, Ealing, shows a turtle drawing a little cart about the garden, a task which he apparently does not resent in the least. Of course, he is never kept harnessed for any length of time. He is quite tame, follows the children about the garden, and will even eat from their fingers.

OUT OF A BOY'S POCKETS.

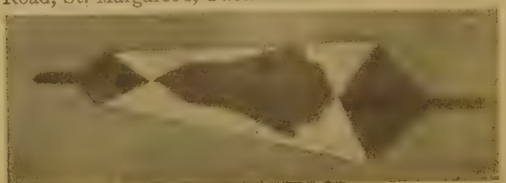
AS may be seen from the photograph, this wall-plaque is something quite out of the common, for it is made up of all the odds and ends one would expect to find in turning out a little boy's pockets. The articles number considerably over one hundred, and the following can be easily seen in the photograph: Face of old watch, spike from the top of a policeman's or soldier's helmet, and



also the badge off same, at the very top of plaque; walnut, pencil-sharpener, pipe, two or three pairs of scissors, several compasses, a large number of keys of all sizes, sewing-machine shuttle, toy cannon, two or three metal animals, folding cork-screw, springs and cog-wheels out of old clock, dice, toy bells, old coins, and a large number of chains of all sorts and sizes. They are all mounted on a board covered with green velvet, and as all the articles have been given a coat of gold paint it makes a very pretty and striking ornament. It weighs over 7lb. and measures 18in. in diameter.—Mr. Richard W. Davis, 8, Hallgate, Cottingham, East Yorks.

A PRETTY JAPANESE CUSTOM.

THESE quaint little things are used by the Japanese and are made of folded paper, through which runs a piece of some stuff very much like a split straw in appearance, the whole being tied round with fancy gold thread. The presence of one of these little ornaments stuck on a packet or parcel denotes that it is a gift. On receiving such a parcel the recipient would not think it was some purchase of his own arrived from the stores, or the return of some article lent—he would know at once that it contained a present. These little 'gift signs," which vary both in size and colour (the former more to suit the size of the packet, and the latter for variety and pretty effects), are not used, however, when the gift is one's photograph. That, I believe, is the only exception.—Mr. F. S. Maudling, 15, Godstone Road, St. Margaret's, Twickenham.

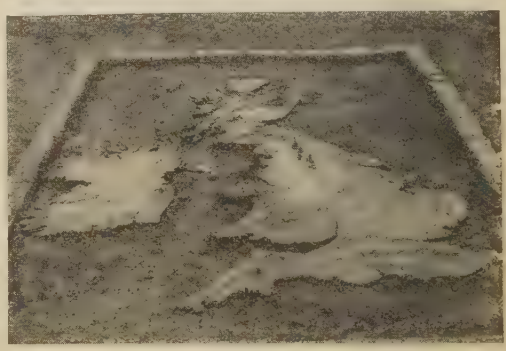


AN AFTER-DINNER AMUSEMENT.

THE lady and the two figures seen in the accompanying photograph are made of raisins, figs, and apples. Raisins were first threaded on pins to represent the legs, then came a fig for the body, the arms being obtained by bending the pin in the direction desired. The face is a fig, upon which it is possible to carve with a fruit knife, eyes, nose, mouth, and so forth, the figure being neatly finished off with a fig cap. In the case of the lady, the dress is indicated by a number of figs placed on top of each other, while the body is represented by an apple. To add to the effect she is adorned with a little toy chain and carries a parasol made of white paper, the head-gear consisting of a fig beautified with a bird's feather. For after-dinner amusement there are few things to equal the making of such novelties.

A DOG'S REMARKABLE JOURNEY.

THOSE travellers who are proud of the distances they have traversed would, perhaps, object to comparing their achievements with those of a mere dog; but if they did so—and the particular canine they selected for the comparison was Owney, the railway post-office dog—they would surely afterwards feel somewhat overshadowed, for practically the entire life of this remarkable animal was spent in one continuous endless journey. Not only did he traverse almost every mile of the great railway systems of Canada and the United States, but he also made two trips across the Atlantic to Europe. This strange animal first began his endless wanderings one day in Toledo, Ohio, where he, by chance, wandered into a railway mail-car which was just about to start out. The presence of the common street dog was not observed until the train was well on its way. Clerks took pity on him and left him on the train, labelling him to the next mail-car. He kept on travelling, each time in a different car and with a new label attached. He was sent on and on, and started across the ocean to London, where he travelled on to Paris and other European cities, returning to America a year later. He was now famous, and was known to every mail-clerk in America and many in Europe. Everyone helped him along the journey, which, however, was suddenly ended in his tenth year by Owney being shot as mad in Toledo, where he first began his famous itinerary. He is still travelling, however. The United States Government had his carcass mounted, and, as our picture shows, he still wears his collection of labels. Owney is now journeying from city to city as part of the United States Government's Railway Mail Service exhibit at various exhibitions.



AN INGENIOUS RELIEF MAP.

THIS relief map of the British Isles, believed to be the first of the kind ever constructed, was made with clay by Mr. P. G. Shewry, one of the teachers of the Buxton Council Boys' School, as an aid in the teaching of geography. The mountains, hills, and chief peaks are formed of ridges of clay; small channels have been cut to represent the rivers, while here and there depressions indicate the presence of lakes. The important towns are marked according to their size, by means of coloured marbles embedded in the clay. The map, which gives a thorough and practical illustration of the physical features and towns of our island home, was constructed in an unused portion of the gardens belonging to the school.—Mr. J. J. Shaw, 9, Market Street, Buxton.

WHAT WAS THE DISTANCE?

IN reply to a question as to how far he had travelled a gentleman once said, "One-tenth over one thousand miles." It may afford readers of THE STRAND some little amusement to interpret this somewhat curious answer.—Mr. Reginald D. Bridgewater, the *Financial Times*, 72, Coleman Street, London, E.C. (The answer will be given next month.)

WE are informed by a correspondent that the Bridge Problem reproduced by us in our April issue (p. 506) is by W. H. Whitfeld, and is No. XII. in part I. of Ernest Bergholt's book of Bridge Problems ("Double Dummy Bridge," T. de la Rue and Co.). We did not publish the problem as a new one, but were unaware of its source.